ANTIOCH *the* REVIEW

WINTER '61-'62

The Auto-Beatnik, the Auto-Critic, and the Justification of Nonsense
ROBERT OLIPHANT

Morality in Anthropological Perspective
R. D. LAKIN

Mark Twain in Australia
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Editor's Shop Talk

■ On the last pages of this issue is an announcement of the birth, pedigree, and prognosis of ALMA—the Association of Literary Magazines of America. We are proud to have been one of the parents of this optimistic baby and we wish it a long, happy, and productive life.

Small magazines—especially those like us which are located off the gregarious paths of commerce—sometimes get slightly paranoid in institutional outlook, though not, we hope, in editorial content. It was reassuring if not exactly heartening to learn at the natal gathering in St. Paul that we are not alone. The economics of many other quarterlies are just as ridiculous as our own, the distribution problems as frustrating, the rewards as intangible. It was to deal jointly with these commercial concerns on a scale beyond the capacity of most individual member magazines that the organization was formed.

While the possibilities for strengthening the economic position and public acceptance of small magazine publishing lie in the future, the fact of the organization itself is of historic significance. Every small magazine is founded in a spirit of revolt—to print a point of view or a school of writing or a poet it believes the existing journals are ignoring—and it lives its life in a spirit of fierce independence. Each is a labor of love, and it is often a love that expresses itself in chauvinism and jealousy, editorial broadsides and sniping from the columns. That nineteen such magazines could agree to a mutual-aid organization with no compromise to their zealously guarded edi-

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torial sovereignties, no moratorium in the aesthetic war—those that enjoy such in-fighting—is no small achievement. There is no reason now to doubt that ALMA will soon encompass the hundred or more other eligible journals.

The phrase "literary magazines" in the title might puzzle some of our readers who think of these as magazines devoted solely to fiction, poetry, and articles of literary criticism—as indeed some member magazines are. Others, however, like us are more broadly concerned with all the humanities and social sciences. But alternative designations are even more misleading: "Little magazines" not only refers to a movement now past, but always had, we thought, a patronizing ring to it. "Scholarly magazines" sounds more like the professional journals—work horses of a different color. And "semi-scholarly" is just half-baked. In justification of the label chosen, we might argue that the province of literature includes all of man's activities. But we prefer the point that the serious, dedicated magazine is in itself part of today's literature, as much as the hard-cover book—indeed, more so than many publications posing in hard covers.

This last is a point not sufficiently appreciated, we feel. A short story or a poem may be read and enjoyed in a magazine, but it is seldom given serious critical attention until it is anthologized or its author has gathered up enough of them, and a publisher, to reprint it in hard covers. An article will sometimes get noticed in the news or feature sections of the press, but it must appear in book form before it comes to the attention of the newspaper's "literary editor." Perhaps ALMA can help this situation too.

■ Our Winter '58-'59 issue was devoted to "The American Abroad." In several articles, and even in the stories, we examined the effects of foreign travel and living on American businessmen, students, professional people, and other travelers. This issue received more notice than any other single issue of recent years, and much of its contents is still being quoted and reprinted.

Our next issue, Spring '62, examines the other side of the coin—the effects of American travel and business on the countries visited. It is obvious that our foreign business and industrial operations, as well as government aid projects, are affecting not only the economics but the very cultural patterns of many countries. Some of these influences are direct and dramatic, some subtle but more pervasive. For some we are damned, for some praised, and for many we are both hated and loved. As an Englishman said on a recent CBS Report: "I detest the Americans and all they are doing to England. But then I hear some of their marvellous jazz or see one of their excellent cinemas or use one of their ingenious gadgets and I find I just love the Americans."

Irwin Abrams, who edited "The American Abroad," is gathering material for this next issue—much of it from overseas sources. It promises to be a worthy sequel to the earlier issue.

P.H.R.

The Auto-Beatnik, the Auto-Critic, and the Justification of Nonsense

By ROBERT OLIPHANT

■ As members of an intellectual community, we in the colleges dwell for the most part in a world of symbols—a world which has a rather close connection with the real world, the visceral world of birth, copulation, and death. The student who weeps over a *C* on her record, the student whose headache comments on the difficulty of a long reading assignment, the student whose digestion protests the inequities of a take-home examination, the professor who weeps over a *C* on *his* record—all testify to the closeness of this connection. But our world of symbols, on the whole, is a comfortable world. We can arrange, we can control the various elements of which it is composed, whether they be concepts, Christ-figures, or phonemes. We are, in work and in commerce with one another, "high verbals." We are the elect. We are the singers of songs, the dreamers of dreams, the typers of typescripts. Our society honors us—and we honor ourselves. After all, anyone can learn to manipulate a lawnmower; not everyone can learn to manipulate an idea.

As individuals, however, we cannot construct a private world of insights and ideas; rather, we must adhere to a conventional system of symbols. We are members of an inner circle, intellectually and socially; but like the residents of one of Dante's inner circles we

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For seven years between graduation from Washington and Jefferson College and the beginning of graduate work at Stanford University, ROBERT OLIPHANT was a professional musician. His present field of interest is English philology; he has published several articles on the subject in the professional journals and is now working on a book about the philologists of the last century. He teaches English at San Fernando Valley State College.

are stuck in a common mud—our language. Most of us wallow cheerfully about in our linguistic mire. A few of us—our artists of language—play with the mud, molding it into new and fanciful shapes, making verbal mudpies for posterity to preserve and cherish. Others—our comparative anthropologists—study the mud in other sections of the human Inferno. They point out that the aborigines in the next section are quite content with a different kind of mud. They suggest that these happy folk are not hampered, as are we, by a lineal, actor-action, Indo-European mud. Others—our philosophers of language, our "semudicists"—are quite disturbing. They point out that we can never move with grace and precision as long as we are stuck in an Aristotelian, intensionally-oriented mud. With some justification and considerable vehemence, they exhort us to move up to cleaner, firmer, more factual ground. "Speakers of the world," they say, "get washed. You have nothing to fear but a bath."

Despite this salutary advice, we continue to wallow, amiable hippopotami that we are, splashing and spattering one another in a veritable orgy of communication. A few of us, however, are particularly fascinated by the mud itself. We like to dabble in it; we like to examine its consistency, its color, its texture, even its molecular structure. We like to smear it on the wall and then analyse it carefully. Sometimes we are pelted with mud; sometimes we pelt one another. We are the dedicated students of mud; we are the students of language.

The student of language, be he traditional philologist or structural linguist, deals primarily with the observable facts of verbal behavior; that is, he examines a number of utterances from a language, noting regularities and extracting patterns which lie behind those regularities. He then constructs a system, a "grammar," which defines the structure of all utterances in the language, actual and possible. A language is not the sum of what is and has been said. Rather, it encompasses what might have been said and what may be said. Given its structure, the possibilities of expression are limitless. From his analysis of the observable facts of verbal behavior, the student of language constructs a system which will encompass these possibilities, a system which will label them as "grammatical." While the utterances analyzed are generally drawn from speech, from casual, ordinary discourse, there is some reason to believe that this

corpus might be expanded to include non-casual, extra-ordinary discourse. Thus the student of language might with profit examine not only speech but also literature, for the latter forms a part—an essential part—of the utterances in a language.

To put it more technically, a language, according to the linguist Chomsky in *Syntactic Structures*, is an infinite set; that is, given a finite number of words and a finite system of rules for their combination, an infinite number of combinations are possible—combinations which will be "grammatical." For example, the sentence, "Colorless green ideas sleep furiously," is grammatically possible, although culturally improbable. The words themselves are familiar; the sentence itself conforms to the pattern of the sentence, "Lively young students study occasionally." The latter sentence is a more probable one; that is, the listener could supply a context in which it would be appropriate, in which it might be uttered. Both sentences, however, are equally grammatical. The first sentence is an improbable one; but it is a possible one. It is nonsense, but it is grammatical nonsense. It fits the system constructed by the student of language.

If we view our system as a machine with an input of sentence patterns, vocabulary items, and substitution procedures, it can be said to generate utterances. Many of these utterances will be nonsense, but they will be grammatical nonsense. An actual machine such as this would be a very complex one, much too complex for our present machine-building capabilities. But it is possible to construct a simpler yet analogous machine which will generate utterances. It will not, of course, faithfully mirror the incredibly complex workings of the human mind, nor will the utterances which it generates strike us as probable ones. But it will be an interesting machine, and the utterances which it generates may have some interesting implications for us as students of language, as students of literature, and as speakers and writers of English.

One such machine has been constructed by Mr. Worthy of the Laboratory for Automata Research, Librascope Division, General Precision, Inc. Using an LGP-30 computer, an input was programmed consisting of 32 grammatical patterns, a vocabulary of 850 common English words classified into 40 grammatical and syntactical groups, and a random selection procedure for selecting sequences of patterns and words to fit those patterns. The output of the machine was arbitrarily segmented into groups of six patterns, or "lines." Each group of six lines is called a "poem." The machine itself is called the "Auto-Beatnik."

For example, given the pattern, determiner-plural noun-verb-adjective-conjunction-adjective (D 1 2 3 C 3), random substitution from the similarly classified vocabulary generates among others the following combinations: 1) "Few computers are cool but stupid." 2) "All planes are sexy but beat." 3) "All birds are starry and dead." Given a particular sequence of patterns drawn from the 32 possible patterns, random substitution within those patterns generates the following group of six lines, a "poem" generated by the Auto-Beatnik:

> Adieu, most moons are floating or neurotic.
> Act me,
> Or on the insect, she fell gayly,
> You tiptoe openly around an earth,
> And singing softly is like spinning drunkenly,
> That insect was very torrid.

While the words within each pattern are familiar and the patterns themselves grammatical, the poem generated by the Auto-Beatnik is an improbable sequence of vocabulary combinations. Yet given our system, our "grammar," the sequence is a possible one. It is nonsense, but it is grammatical nonsense. To a reader, the sequence is possibly suggestive, but it is generated randomly, without intention, without reference to a context of human experience shared by the author—in this case, the Auto-Beatnik—and the reader. The reader, actually, is entitled to infer nothing regarding a possible context or a possible significance, for neither context nor significance are part of the machine.

It may be helpful here to apply Gardiner's distinction between speech and language. Speech, he suggests, is an event; language is

a vehicle. Speech is a message; a language is a code. Speech—and we here include writing—occurs in a situation, a context, cultural and verbal. It involves a speaker or writer and a listener or reader, actual or assumed. A language is a set of symbols by which references are made to situations. Without reference to a situation or context, a statement has only grammatical and vocabulary meanings; it does not have the essential dimension of meaning—a "thing meant." For example, without a context, the phrase "honest Iago" has no significance, although the words themselves are familiar. Uttered by Othello, however, in the context of a scene in the play *Othello,* the phrase has considerable significance. Likewise, without a context the following statements, some from the Auto-Beatnik, others from contemporary poets, have no significance. Although the words themselves are familiar, the statements are only grammatical nonsense:

My stomach is swollen and dumb.
(Michael McClure)
Mr. Mozart will be sore if his feet
get cold. *(Mitsuko Inouse)*
We glide softly on that blast.
(Auto-Beatnik)
While poets are kissing, that slow
street floats slowly.
(Auto-Beatnik)
You are full of God's Saliva.
(Murano Shiro)
And all the slim, gracious, blind planes
are coming. *(Auto-Beatnik)*

In a context, however, some of the lines have considerable significance. For example, one of the lines quoted occurs in a poem entitled, "Physique:"

Corpulent maidservant of the soul!
You have a soft entry,
You are a flower vase
Incessantly leaking
—You are full of God's Saliva.

We may say, then, that the existence of an appropriate context assigns a significance previously lacking to a statement which without a context is only grammatical nonsense. Interestingly enough,

Chomsky's example of grammatical nonsense, "Colorless green ideas sleep furiously," was later incorporated into a poem by Dell H. Hymes, thus assigning it a significance which it previously lacked.[1] In the same way we can incorporate one of the lines quoted before from the Auto-Beatnik into a short poem; let us call it "A Preliminary Epitaph for Senator Goldwater:"

> Futility will make its stand on Right.
> And manufacture Must from Might.
> The men are silent, the mills are humming,
> And all slim, gracious, blind planes are coming.

This process of supplying a context for a nonsense statement is an intellectually valid one. In *The Philosophy of Literary Form*, Kenneth Burke points out that the statement, "New York City is in Iowa," would have to be ruled out according to the criteria of semantic meaning, for it cannot be verified. It is, as it stands, nonsense. But he suggests that the statement can be poetically validated, and he goes on to frame a context which makes it a significant statement:

> Has one ever stood, for instance, in some little outlying town, on the edge of the wilderness, and watched a train go by? Has one perhaps suddenly felt that the train, and its tracks, were a kind of arm of the city, reaching out across the continent, quite as though it were simply Broadway itself extended? . . . "New York City is in Iowa" is "poetically" true. As a metaphor, it provides valid insight. To have ruled it out, by strict semantic authority, would have been vandalism.

But the framing of a context for a nonsense statement is not limited to what Burke calls instances of "poetic" meaning. For example, the television program, "Keep Talking," provides its panelists, verbally agile comedians, with an isolated statement. The comedians then extemporize a narrative, liberally laced with jokes, into which the statement fits logically, naturally—even unobtrusively. Again, the comedy team of Nichols and May often ask the audience for an opening and closing line; they then proceed to improvise an amus-

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[1]This line is discussed in C. F. Voegelin, "Casual and Non-Casual Utterances within Unified Structure," *Style in Language*, ed. Thomas A. Sebeok (New York, 1960), 59.

ing dialogue, thus supplying a context for a previously isolated nonsense statement.

Each of the contexts thus supplied is what Hans Reichenbach would call a "context of justification," rather than a "context of discovery." The actual process of thinking, he points out, evades distinct analysis: it is in part logically determined, in part erratic, in part automatic. Hence the process of thinking, the "context of discovery," is left to psychological analysis. Logic, justification, is the *touchstone*, the validating process, of thinking, not its propelling force. As opposed to the context of discovery, the context of justification can be analyzed; it can be substantiated. It is "an ordered series of thought operations so constructed that they make the results of a thought justifiable."

You will recall that contexts of justification were supplied for Chomsky's nonsense statement and for one of the nonsense statements generated by the Auto-Beatnik. Our machine, then, can be said to provide a context of discovery somewhat analogous to automatic verbal thinking. To go further, the context of discovery, in the area of social criticism, appears at times to be an automatic verbal process. Consider the following passage from C. Wright Mills' essay, "Intellectual Craftsmanship." Here Mills reproduces a portion of his notes taken while doing research during 1956-57:

> Mosca backs up his thesis with this assertion: It's power of organization that enables the minority always to rule. There are organized minorities and they run things and men. There are unorganized majorities and they are run. But why not also consider the apparent opposite? In fact, why not the full range of possibilities . . . ?

On the basis of an automatic rearrangement of possibilities, Mills goes on to construct a hypothesis:

> From the nineteenth to the twentieth century, we have witnessed a shift from a society organized as 1 and 4 [organized minority and unorganized majority] to a society established *more* in terms of 3 and 2 [organized

> *majority* and unorganized *minority*]. We have moved from an elite state to an organization state, in which the elite is no longer so organized or so unilaterally powerful, and the mass is more organized and more powerful.

You will note that Mills' hypothesis retains the adjectives in Mosca's original thesis and transposes the key nouns, "minority" and "majority." Later on Mills gives other examples of this kind of automatic verbal play, stating that "an attitude of playfulness toward the phrases and words with which various issues are defined often loosens the imagination." One can often achieve what Kenneth Burke calls "perspective through incongruity," and the imagination thus loosened can explore the possibilities suggested by the results of a playful manipulation of language. The context of justification is responsible, logical; the context of discovery, on the other hand, can be playful, almost automatic.

The input of the Auto-Beatnik, you will recall, consisted of patterns, vocabulary, and substitution procedures. If we examine Mills' grammatical context of discovery, we find that in this case it consists of a quotation or "kernel sentence" and an operation, the rearrangement of the key nouns, "minority" and "majority," performed upon the kernel sentence. Putting aside the Auto-Beatnik, we can construct a simple machine analogous to Mills' grammatical context of discovery. From an input of kernel sentences and operations, the machine will generate nonsense statements—statements lacking a context of justification. The machine, it should be noted, is not a genuine social critic. The statements it generates are nonsense, albeit grammatical nonsense, and any significance assigned these statements by reader or writer is purely arbitrary. The statements which it generates are called "opinions"; the machine itself is called the "Auto-Critic."

For the Auto-Critic, the input consists of three kernel sentences drawn from a stock of non-casual utterances, i.e. utterances which are often reproduced or quoted by people who share the same language. The three kernal sentences are these:

1) Poetry is emotion recollected in tranquillity.
2) Poetry is feigned history.
3) An honest man's the noblest work of God.

The operation performed by the Auto-Critic is a rearrangement, a transposition, of first and last nouns. The nonsense statements thus generated are these:

1) Tranquillity is emotion recollected in poetry.
2) History is feigned poetry.
3) An honest God's the noblest work of man.

It should be pointed out that the kernel sentences and the nonsense statements are, as they stand, equally grammatical—and equally nonsensical. Contexts of justification exist, however, for the kernel sentences in the works from which they were quoted. Taken in isolation, a reader may, of course, discern significance in the kernel sentences, assigning a context of justification from his own experience, recognizing in them a succinct statement of his own ideas. But this context of justification is, it should be stressed, an arbitrary one, varying with the reader's cultivation, his philosophical commitments, and the state of his digestion. In much the same way, an equally arbitrary context of justification could be assigned to nonsense statement 2), "History is feigned poetry," in the light of contemporary attitudes toward the historian as an artist who creates the past. One could also be assigned to nonsense statement 3), "An honest God's the noblest work of man," in the light of current concepts regarding the whimsical anthropomorphic basis of religion. Indeed, in terms of their relationship to their kernel sentences, the nonsense statements bear comparison with Herbert J. Muller's appraisal of the lamentable social consequences of the industrial revolution: "Invention is the mother of necessity."

Grammatically, the Auto-Critic can be made more sophisticated. To our input we can add a small vocabulary of grammatical forms, e.g. forms of the verb "to be." We then have two operations: 1) a transposition of first and last nouns; 2) a substitution of grammatical forms required by the transposed nouns. A new input then consists of a grammatical vocabulary ("is," "are," "men") and two kernel sentences:

1) Patriotism is the last refuge of scoundrels.
2) Man is the measure of all things.

The operations of transposition and grammatical substitution then generate the following nonsense statements:

1) Scoundrels are the last refuge of patriotism.
2) Things are the measure of all men.

Despite an apparent relevance of statement 1) to the tactics of the House Committee on Un-American Activities and of statement 2) to our current emphasis in the suburbs upon the house as a status symbol, any significance, any context of justification, assigned these nonsense statements is purely arbitrary. The Auto-Critic itself provides neither situation nor intention. It merely performs automatic operations upon an input of kernel sentences.

In terms of vocabulary, the Auto-Critic can be made more sophisticated if we add a small group of noun-antonyms. A new input sequence then consists of the following:

1) Punctuality is the courtesy of kings.
2) Whosoever would be a man must be a nonconformist.

We add to the input a small vocabulary: "woman," "tardiness," "queens." We then make the operation of noun transposition optional, omitting it in sentence one and retaining it in sentence two. With vocabulary substitution, the Auto-Critic then generates the following statements:

1) Tardiness is the courtesy of queens.
2) Whosoever would be a nonconformist must be a woman.

The operation of vocabulary substitution, or lexical substitution, can be further refined. In actual verbal behavior, the substitution of an antonym in word association tests is considered a common response. People with a high percentage of common responses, "high commonality" people, will associate "day" with "night" and "black" with "white." Low commonality people tend to associate more whimsically, e.g. "day" with "play" and "black" with "blind." In *The Road to Xanadu,* John Livingston Lowes cites an interesting example of Coleridge's substitution procedures. In *Biographia Literaria* Coleridge quotes a line from Otway's *Venice Preserved.* The original is "Lutes, laurels, seas of milk, and ships of amber." Coleridge, however, misquotes the line as "Lutes, *lobsters,* seas of

milk, and ships of amber," substituting another plural noun which resembles the original in number of syllables and in initial sound, though not in lexical meaning. In terms of lexical substitution based upon sound similarity, one might also note John Kenneth Galbraith's comment upon the past administration's never-flagging optimism in an atmosphere of national complacency: "The bland leading the bland."

In a more refined lexical substitution procedure, nouns in a vocabulary can be classified and coded according to three criteria: 1) broad semantic similarity, i.e. nouns can be classified as actors, actions, concrete, or abstract; 2) phonemic resemblance, i.e. nouns can be classified by their endings "ion," "ity," "er," or lack of ending; 3) syllabic isomorphism, i.e. nouns of four syllables can be classified together. In much the same way as the Auto-Beatnik substituted the appropriate part of speech, the Auto-Critic substitutes the appropriately coded noun. Since these three criteria can operate singly or together, there are six lexical substitution operations possible. The following will serve as kernel sentences:

1) Necessity is the mother of invention.
2) An institution is the lengthened shadow of a man.

The coded vocabulary is composed of four words drawn from the *AAUP Bulletin*: "administration," "education," "committee," and "stupidity." The operation of noun transposition is retained, and the operations of lexical substitution use the criterion of phonemic resemblance in sentence 1) and that of broad semantic similarity in sentence 2). The Auto-Critic then generates the following statements:

1) Education is the mother of stupidity.
2) A committee is the lengthened shadow of an administration.

The coded vocabulary can be expanded, while still drawing from terms frequently used in the *AAUP Bulletin*. With an expanded vocabulary, the transposition and substitution procedures previously described, and the kernel sentences already used in this paper, the Auto-Critic generates among others the following statements:

1) An examination is information recollected in hostility.
2) Linguistics is feigned science.
3) An honest bibliography is the noblest work of scholarship.
4) Criticism is the last refuge of incompetents.
5) Grades are the measure of all students.
6) Whosoever would be an educationist must be an illiterate.
7) Rationality is the luxury of philosophers.
8) Registration is the mother of confusion.
9) A professor is the lengthened shadow of a dissertation.

It would be an interesting exercise to find contexts of justification for these nonsense statements, but our primary concern is with the Auto-Critic as a model of automatic verbal behavior. Broadly speaking, the Auto-Critic is composed of a set of kernel sentences, a vocabulary, and a set of operations. The result is what we might call a set of transformations; that is, the output represents a transformation (nonsense statements) of the input (kernel sentences). In short, we give the Auto-Critic a set of clichés and a technique for manipulating those clichés. To put it another way, we give him a liberal education and a rather specious intellectual method. The resulting product might pass for original thinking, but it is not. The machine can only manipulate words; it can neither test nor justify the validity of its statements. The product is only an automatic transformation of a familiar cliché. It is what we might call a "transformational cliché."

A similar pattern of transformational clichés characterizes a portion of the output of many educated speakers of English. Although the sentence and vocabulary input is more extensive, and the operations more refined, the result, I suggest, is different in degree rather than in kind. Many of the statements of Eric Bentley, G. K. Chesterton, Richard Blackmur, as well as President Kennedy's campaign speeches and *Time* magazine film reviews, can be analyzed in terms of the operations performed by the Auto-Critic. A liberal sprinkling of transformational clichés without a context of justification argues, I submit, a superficialty of content. It suggests wit without significance, form without content, high verbalism without high purpose. Such speakers are the prisoners of their education. They allude, they entertain, but they do not illuminate.

They are, in large part, verbal automata, human counterparts of the Auto-Critic.

And yet the transformational cliché, the automatic context of discovery discerned in C. Wright Mills, has its uses. Remember that his thoughtful book, *The Power Elite,* grew out of his efforts to find a context of justification for his automatic rearrangement of Mosca's kernel sentence. Responsibly used, the operations of the Auto-Critic can give us a powerful tool. While the statements thus generated are essentially analytic statements, tautologies, statements not subject to factual verification, they are often useful tautologies, expressing a concept concisely and compelling justification. The transformational cliché may serve not only as a context of discovery but as a concise method of presentation, operating as a mnemonic and persuasive device. In short, as long as the speaker realizes that he is automatically playing with words, he is entitled to play with them. It is only when speaker and listener begin to confuse transformational clichés with genuine insight that confusion looms on the horizon.

Let me go further to point out that there is a kind of verbal behavior even more automatic, even more dangerous—and much less interesting. Erich Fromm has defined "pseudo-thinking" as the parroting of statements and ideas culled from an established body of opinion. Here the clichés are not even transformed; rather, they are reproduced in all their pristine dullness. The transformational cliché, at least, avoids the hazard of the culturally determined, completely predictable opinion. As speakers and writers, our command of the transformational cliché, our mastery of the substitution and transposition possibilities within our grammatical and lexical system, our grasp, in short, of the structure of our language as an infinite set, may help us out of our linguistic and cultural mud. Like T. S. Eliot's hippopotamus, we may take wing, leaving our truly automatic verbals wrapped in the old miasmal mist of facts and propositions.

And in this connection, as students of literature, we can use our knowledge

of the possibilities of our language as a means of understanding and appreciating the mastery and boldness with which our artists of language generate statements. Witness the substitution procedures of E. E. Cummings' line, "She kept her sense of humor right up to the beginning." Note how Wallace Stevens substitutes verbs in noun positions in the lines, "Let Be be finale of Seem / The only emperor is the Emperor of Ice Cream." Indeed, the poetic conventions of rhyme and meter provide the poet with the substitution criteria of phonemic similarity and syllabic isomorphism. Sapir discusses Robert Frost's "Blueberries" in this way, and it might be further pointed out that the rhetorical techniques of our masters of English prose—Hooker, Browne, Gibbon, Macaulay—utilize similar criteria. Reality, we are fond of saying, is complex, infinite; but our possibilities for expression, given the structure of our language, are also infinite. The transformational cliché makes nonsense out of the conventional wisdom of the past, and then compels a justification of that nonsense. It makes chaos out of order, and then compels a reordering of experience; but it does so within a coherent system. As students of literature, our knowledge of this system gives us a grasp of the concrete facts of form, helping us toward an understanding of the order which the artist of language imposes upon experience.

Finally, to the student of language, the transformational clichés of the Auto-Critic have some interesting implications. The Auto-Beatnik, you will recall, relied upon a linguistic analysis of English drawn from Fries and Roberts. It generated utterances from patterns and vocabulary groups, the stock-in-trade of the structural analysis of English. The results were, of course, grammatical and interesting. The Auto-Critic, on the other hand, dealt with our language as composed in part of a body of non-casual utterances, a body of quotations, a body of conventional wisdom. The system itself was extended to include operations performed upon sentences; on the basis of these operations, statements were generated. The results were also grammatical and interesting. Further, they appear to mirror an area of contemporary verbal behavior. It may well be that a responsible analysis of English will have to consider the non-casual utterances extant in the language. After all, *Webster's Unabridged Dictionary* includes words used by Chaucer and Shakespeare. As T. S. Eliot put it, we dwell in the present moment of the past. The literary

monuments of the past, remote and immediate, are part of the furniture of the present. Indeed, we use the present tense in discussing a work of art, and rightly so; for it is contemporary with us. It is part of the complex body of material which our linguistic system must encompass. It is, moreover, an important part, providing the speaker with materials and patterns of expression. Ultimately, then, as the Auto-Critic might put it, the proper study of linguistics is literature.

Western Colorado: A Day of Broken Clouds

By ERNEST KROLL

You know how a few clouds keep space out,
Clip one in to the planet.
Well, only a handful riding right
Over the mountains reined them in,
And one astride a granite
Mammoth managed it like a mahout.

ERNEST KROLL has published two volumes of verse, *Cape Horn and Other Poems* and *The Pauses of the Eye*. A third, in preparation, will be titled *American Panels and Other Poems*. He has a government post in Washington. Another of Mr. Kroll's poems appears on page 440.

The Ninth Day

By THOMAS FITZSIMMONS

The green deer enter
And silver
Leopards
Swift slim
White giraffe—
    Crystal hooves breaking
    Rainbows
On the grass—
To graze
Snare
Small leaves
Poise at the cooling streams.

                Seeking berries
The leopards range—
Silver bells
Rustling.
Shoulders in dark places
                Thrusting
Quiver
Amid sudden
Thorns
And the caught bells tinkle
                And the green deer
Pause
Delicately
Listening

In addition to poetry, THOMAS FITZSIMMONS is the author of *USSR, Its People, Its Society, Its Culture*, published last year. He was formerly editor of Survey of World Cultures and is now teaching English at the new Michigan State University Oakland.

As the great cats push to feed . . . .
Everywhere the bells now
Tingling
Trinkling
The white necks slim
To stillness
Listening
Tinkling
Silver bells trinkling
Circling
TINKLING
Something is about to

Women

By ROBERT SARGENT

From the gray place of the long, unattended nights,
I think of those other people, now and then,
Of their soft bodies and voices, their colorful clothes,
Their wisdom in rites of birth and death and marriage,
Their easy accommodations to urge and principle,
Their mingling mixture of discerning shrewdness and credulity.
Also I bear in mind their blandishments and cajolery,
Their disbursement to the chosen of shivery and savage delights.
How busily they work at the everyday business of living!
How they buzz, and glow, and shine, and babble like babies!
And how lovely all of them are! All so lovely! Even
The bitter harridan on the corner, old and gross.

ROBERT SARGENT, born in New Orleans and reared in the South, is now a government engineer in Washington, D.C.

Morality in Anthropological Perspective

By R. D. LAKIN

■ As a pagan addressing the Christian clergy, the sociologist C. Wright Mills, in a *Nation* article some months ago, declared: "The brotherhood of man is now less a goal than an obvious condition of biological survival." Although this claim does not find much support in official circles these days, the dangers to the continued existence of life on earth inherent in the conflict of competing cultures has been widely recognized by the group whose professional job it is to study cultures—the social anthropologists. Ralph Linton, for instance, has stated:

> It is obvious that unless the various nations which compose the modern world can come to some sort of agreement as to what things are important and desirable, we are headed for a catastrophe. In the dark ages which would result from a world war of atomic bombs and bacteria there would be no region sufficiently isolated to escape destruction and carry on the torch of enlightenment. The peoples of the world must find common areas of understanding or die.

Other anthropologists have made similar statements in various contexts.

Perhaps this growing feeling of the desperateness of the present world conflict partially accounts for the recent increase in the anthropological literature of attempts to establish a theoretical basis for a valid method with which to make a crosscultural study, comparison,

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R. D. LAKIN's interests are balanced between literature and philosophy—he is presently teaching both at Colorado State University—and he joins the two subjects with a primary concern for the problem of value. He has published articles on literary subjects in the *Midwest Quarterly* and is now engaged in writing a novel in which he hopes to deal with considerations of value that usually escape the reach of philosophical exposition.

and evaluation of existing cultures. This endeavor constitutes a radical change of emphasis in anthropological circles, which have for a long time been inclined to deny the hope, much less the possibility, of such an evaluation. At present a genuine and intense debate is in progress between these two opposing lines of thought which has considerable practical, as well as philosophical, importance.

Any conclusions about the outcome of this debate must necessarily be tentative and will, perhaps, reflect our hopes far more than they will represent an "objective" weighing of the facts. Still, a survey of the present state of this anthropological discussion leads me to believe that two fairly strong claims regarding it can now be made: one, that anthropologists have not effected a breakthrough in the age-old philosophical struggle between the relativists and the absolutists, though many of them may think they have; and two, despite the first point, the anthropologists (and anthropologically oriented philosophers) have nevertheless indicated important areas in which a meaningful basis may be laid for some kind of critical rapprochement on the question of the minimal needs and values for human survival.

As I have suggested, the cultural relativists (to adopt a name which seems convenient if not thoroughly accurate in all cases) have a long-established and predominant place in the history of anthropology, extending from early workers in the field such as Franz Boas and Edward Westermarck to more contemporary scholars like Ruth Benedict, G. A. Reichard, and Melville Herskovits. As the most recent and perhaps the most self-conscious relativist, Herskovits will provide a useful example for a brief discussion of the cultural relativists' position.

Herskovits outlines his relativist theory in the abridged edition of *Man and His Works*. He there states that "evaluations stand or fall with the acceptance of the premises from which they derive . . . conclusions drawn from one definition of what is desirable will not agree with those based on another formulation." Because such evaluations are inevitably conditioned by the culture in which they occur, they are hopelessly biased and onesided, and, hence, inappropriate as a means for scientific evaluation. Other cultures appear "odd" or "wrong" to us because we judge them by the standards of our culture. If we make an attempt to understand the other cultures in

their essential "wholeness," we find that their ways of life are not only understandable but "right" for them.

Thus, in discussing the recurrent religious seizures, which display all of the symptoms of neurotic hysteria, experienced by members of some African tribes, Herskovits claims that we Westerners would probably equate their behavior with psychotic abnormality and he concludes: "Yet, when we look beneath behavior to meaning, and place such apparently random acts in their cultural frame of reference, such conclusions become untenable. For *relative to the setting in which these possession experiences occur, they are not to be regarded as abnormal at all*, much less psychopathological." This conclusion which Herskovits underscores brushes aside three important possibilities for assessing this situation in terms which would not necessarily lead to a relativistic conclusion. It is important to note these possibilities in order to see clearly the implications of the relativist thesis.

First of all, without giving any explicit reasons, Herskovits dismisses the very real possibility that a whole society might be characterized by a psychologist as "psychotic" on perfectly legitimate scientific grounds, since that definition *even in our own culture* is not dependent on what the rest of the society thinks is normal or abnormal, though there may be a rough empirical connection. Moreover, we would scarcely take seriously the suggestion that the inmates of a mental institution could formulate a standard of normal and abnormal behavior that would be equally as valid as that of the psychiatrists who had the inmates committed. If the psychological criterion rests on anything more than simple majority agreement as to the proper usage of "normality," there is no *a priori* reason why it might not be equally as applicable to large groups as to individuals.

Second, as Herskovits himself goes on to indicate, other factors would enter into a psychological evaluation of these seizures. If they in fact provide Africans the "psychological security, aesthetic expression, and emotional release" which Herskovits asserts, then a competent evaluation would have to weigh these results against the kind of results—usually frustration, enervation, and physical deterioration—observable in patients who manifest such symptoms in our society. Doubtless the psychologist's judgment would be differ-

ent depending upon the observable effects on the individuals in the two widely different contexts.

The third explanation to be considered is that the psychological classification of normal and abnormal might stand in need of correction and/or refinement. This classification purports to be scientific, in which case it should be equally applicable to any situation, just as the biologist's or the chemist's classifications are, regardless of the culture in which the classifications were originally made. If it is not so applicable, the classification must be further clarified and refined. This does not assure that the classification will be *accepted*, but psychology is not alone among the sciences whose classifications would be *unacceptable* to the Africans. These same Africans might be in unanimous agreement that tomatoes are poisonous vegetables, despite our chemists' and botanists' assurances to the contrary. We could understand historically why they might have such views and we could understand psychologically why they might be utterly incapable of being persuaded by the scientific analysis. But we would not therefore readily be shaken in our conviction as to which classification was right or wrong, unless we were prepared to throw into question the entire scientific enterprise. On the surface, at any rate, Herskovits does not seem to be suggesting such an extension, since, as we shall see, he upholds the scientific anthropological method as support for at least some kind of value judgment; on the other hand, we shall see that the logic of the relativist position does tend to undermine the scientific process.

I have entered into some critical detail of Herskovits' assertion because both it and the criticisms I have offered reveal the need for an underlying source of strength in the relativist argument. On the face of it, the argument would not seem unduly persuasive. Herskovits, like most anthropologists, is obviously struck by the vast array of differences exhibited by the cultures he studies. Likewise, he is impressed by the difficulties of overcoming his own cultural prejudices in order to achieve a proper scientific detachment. These are facts which may make us more or less hopeful about achieving successful crosscultural methods of evaluation, but they do not logically deny the very possibility of success. But the argument derives its power not from its logic but from a rather thoroughgoing sub-

jectivistic-relativistic attitude on all matters of judgment, rather than merely on cultural matters. The reflections which this argument insinuates into our consciousness are of this type: Are not *all* judgments, after all, relative to time and place? Do not southerners, for instance, decide the merits of segregation differently from northerners precisely because they are part of a different kind of social environment? For that matter, does not one man decide that deceiving the public for profit is "all in the game," whereas another man views it as a crime, simply because they have been raised differently, they have had different experiences, and they have different personalities and potentialities?

Such questions involve us in a search for the basis of our moral judgments and arouse in us an anxious doubt about the validity of those judgments. It is this underlying doubt and uncertainty that ensures a fairly favorable reception for the cultural relativist's arguments despite their lack of solid logical support. Cultural relativity is dependent in this sense on the much broader and much more acute problem of relativity in general. Westermarck is most refreshingly candid about this: "[the objective validity of moral judgments] cannot exist. The reason for this is that in my opinion the predicates of all moral judgments, all moral concepts, are ultimately based on emotions, and that, as is very commonly admitted, no objectivity can come from an emotion."

However, the cultural relativists do not rest easily in this position. They, too, are disposed to make judgments and to imply that these judgments have transcultural value. Herskovits particularly is oriented in this direction. The charge that he makes against crosscultural evaluations is that they are "ethnocentric"—"ethnocentrism is the point of view that one's own way of life is to be preferred to all others." This view is perpetuated by enculturative conditioning which is largely inescapable in Herskovits' terms. Yet he does not hesitate to contradict this thesis by his own example in denying that *our* way of life is better than anyone else's. Moreover, he goes on to suggest positive moral values which would be desirable for any culture.

> The very core of cultural relativism is the social discipline that comes of respect for differences—of mutual respect. Emphasis on the worth of many ways of life, not one, is an affirmation of the values in each culture. Such emphasis seeks to understand and to harmonize goals, not to judge and destroy those that do not dovetail with our own.

In this brief passage, Herskovits puts forward an amazing variety of values which he believes would have crosscultural value as opposed to ethnocentric value: social discipline, respect, tolerance, understanding, harmony, and affirmation of the worth of each set of cultural values. Since he rejects the notion that *these* values are ethnocentric, we are left perplexed as to what the basis for them is, as to just how he managed to transcend cultural limitations himself, and as to why he thinks that he might or should be successful in encouraging others to adopt these values. Herskovits would doubtless answer, "the facts"; but the facts, according to the relativist's own thesis, might equally well serve to confirm one in his conviction that his own way was *right for him* as to create an attitude favorable to the adoption of new values of tolerance and respect.

To the charge of complete relativism, Herskovits wishes to register a strong denial, but he is again insufficiently clear about his grounds.

> Cultural relativism, in all cases, must be sharply distinguished from concepts of the relativity of individual behavior, which would negate all social controls over conduct. Conformity to the code of the group is a requirement for any regularity in life. Yet to say that we have a right to expect conformity to the code of our day for ourselves does not imply that we need expect, much less impose, conformity to our code on persons who live by other codes.

Herskovits seems to be under the impression that it is perfectly obvious why we do and should conform to our own moral code, although he does not enlighten us about his reasons. For such an assumption to be made in an era sometimes referred to as "The Age of Conformity" is perhaps understandable enough. Furthermore, "when in Rome, do as the Romans do" has a long, if not unambiguous, history in social life. Yet philosophers, as well as others, have long pondered the question why we should owe allegiance to our own society, and cases embodying exactly such a question extend all the way from Socrates in Athens to the German students who organized an underground movement against Hitler during the Second World War.

The key to Herskovits' own attitude, though not to the general problem, perhaps lies in unhappy experiences with colonial and chauvinistic policies on the part of Western nations. (Our rather

strident bellicosity regarding recent Cuban developments could probably be most charitably accounted for in this manner and certainly gives urgency to Herskovits' remarks.) Again and again, he reveals disillusionment over Western attitudes and policies concerning other cultures.

> It is when, *as in Euro-American culture*, ethnocentrism is rationalized and made the basis of programs of action *detrimental* to the well-being of other peoples that it gives rise to serious problems. . . . The assumption that the cultures of non-literate peoples are of *inferior* quality is an end product. . . . [We should not] judge and *destroy* those cultures that do not dovetail into our own. (my emphasis)

In these sentiments, Herskovits would doubtless be joined by many of his co-workers, such as Kluckhohn and Linton. However, past failures do not justify Herskovits in implying that there is a *necessary* connection between the very attempt to formulate such wide-ranging policies and the results achieved in the past; and he himself disproves such a thesis by indicating values that would serve as a basis for better policies.

As attempts such as Herskovits' have been made to formalize cultural relativism's implicit and explicit assumptions, many anthropologists have recognized its inadequacies. David Bidney, Ralph Linton, and Clyde Kluckhohn, among others, have pointed out many of the difficulties which I have discussed. Clyde Kluckhohn is one of the more persuasive critics and may profitably serve as a spokesman for this group in the same way in which Herskovits served for the relativist position.

Kluckhohn's general thesis is that the relativist's error is due to an unjustified, though understandable, preoccupation with cultural differences rather than with cultural similarities. The differences are more striking and, indeed, at times overwhelming. But out of the myriad facts of cultural life compiled by countless anthropologists, Kluckhohn believes that certain common patterns emerge, that similarities can be found which assume the proportions of universals. Upon the hope of discerning and substantiating this universal pattern rests our chances for developing values that actually have cross-cultural usefulness and meaningfulness.

Kluckhohn, in his essay "Universal Categories of Culture," grants immediately a great part of the relativist's case.

> There are, admittedly, few genuine uniformities in culture content unless one states the content in extremely general form—e.g., clothing, shelter, incest taboos, and the like. . . . It is, unfortunately, the case that up to this point anthropology has not solved very satisfactorily the problem of describing cultures in such a way that objective comparison is possible.

However, Kluckhohn refuses to accept the conclusions which relativists draw from these facts. "The inescapable fact of cultural relativism does not justify the conclusion that cultures are in all respects utterly disparate monads and hence strictly non-comparable entities. If this were literally true, a comparative science of culture would be *ex hypothesi* impossible." He believes that there is a basic, minimal structure in all societies that can serve as a starting point for a method of crosscultural evaluation.

> The broad outlines of the ground of all cultures are and have to be about the same because men always and everywhere are faced with certain unavoidable problems which arise out of the situation "given" by nature. . . . Cooperation to obtain subsistence and for other ends requires a certain minimum of reciprocal behavior, of a standard system of communication, and indeed, of mutually accepted values. . . . The facts of human biology and of human gregariousness supply, therefore, certain invariant points of reference from which crosscultural comparison can start without begging questions that are themselves at issue. . . . [By using the basic needs discovered by psychology, biology, and sociology] comparison can escape from the bias of any distinct culture by taking as its frame of reference natural limits, conditions, values, and pressures.

But this passage requires careful scrutiny. Should Kluckhohn be able to make good his claim to be able to avoid question begging on this issue he would indeed have advanced the entire philosophical wrangle over relativism. Unfortunately, from invariant points of reference and natural limits alone nothing follows. From the biological fact that man must eat to live, we cannot derive the evaluational proposition that man lives to eat. At most we can derive the negative conclusion that unless man eats he will not live. Neither factual statement, each of which expresses a natural limit, tells us anything about such ethical questions as "Why live?" or "How can man live so as to ensure the 'good life'?" If these questions can be anwered, it is only by appeal to criteria other than the biological facts. "Why live?" can be answered "because life is infinitely precious," or "because we have duties to others who depend on us." If it is argued that each of these assertions is merely a rationalization by which nature's purpose is served, it may be countered that such

answers also can lead individuals, if not cultures, to conclude that God's will or their duties must be fulfilled even at the sacrifice of life.

Kluckhohn acknowledges the temptation to equate universals with absolutes and warns against it, yet he does not make explicit the steps by which he thinks the gap between them may be bridged. Universals, as Kluckhohn discusses them, are descriptive terms for conditions which are imposed or "given" by nature and which apply to every culture. But absolutes, as generally treated in philosophical discussion, are unconditioned and unqualified values which retain their validity even though individuals or cultures do not give evidence of them, accept them, or recognize them as binding. Universals are most helpful in enabling us to see why man engages in many different activities, but they do not answer the relativist's demand, which is really a demand not for universals but for absolutes. Universals do not provide a firm basis for comparative purposes precisely because they *are* shaped by the cultures in which they appear; because each culture has had a slightly or radically different set of natural limiting conditions, we cannot assert that one culture *ought* to have reached a certain level of efficiency, say, in satisfying a given universal need, since in its peculiar circumstances perhaps it performed as well as could be done. To raise the demand merely shows the relativist the impregnable character of cultural differences. For the relativist, as Abraham Edel says, "it all depends, it all depends." Thus the discovery of a universal in a given culture allows us to draw no conclusions about its relation to an absolute value (whatever they are, if they are). Intermediate premises are necessary. As yet, these intermediate premises have by and large not been logically established to much of anyone's satisfaction, but there is an important psychological relationship which can be shown by further examination of Kluckhohn's discussion.

Among the categories that Kluckhohn believes have universal significance are these: music, graphic arts, dancing, parallels in linguistic structure, standards of personal excellence, kinship terminology, age grading, and other formal categories of measurement. In another essay, "Ethical Relativity: Sic Et Non," he poses three questions which he thinks are basic to the problem of universals: One, how numerous are these similarities? Two, are they just "empty frames" which do not enable us to escape from the impasse of com-

plete cultural relativity? And three, are they cultural or subcultural or the "conditions for culture?"

The important point to notice about these questions is that they ask for different kinds of answers, yet at the same time no one answer could in itself provide a basis for genuine evaluation. Question one is thoroughly empirical—presumably it can be answered by a requisite amount of diligent scientific research. But suppose we can definitely conclude in the near future or have already so concluded that there are very numerous similarities—what follows from that discovery? Unless further assumptions are made, nothing. Question two calls for an evaluation of the answer to number one, an evaluation attended by the difficulties previously mentioned. If we conclude that there are great similarities, and if we further *decide* that just such similarities are desirable and good, and that, therefore, we should compare cultures on the basis of which culture most effectively promotes and develops those points of similarity, then we have definitely escaped from the impasse of relativity and have established a *standard* which is applicable to all cultures. But we have in this case obviously not done so merely on the basis of the factual answer to question one.

Question three seems openly to demand a non-empirical answer. It poses rather a problem of classification, the need for a decision regarding the facts. If the categories of "cultural" or "subcultural" are completely defined, and yet there is uncertainty about whether a particular set of cultural facts is one or the other, the reason can only be that this particular set constitutes a borderline case in which the facts are seemingly complete, but still insufficient for a decision. Biologists commonly face a similar problem, for example, in deciding whether a given sea-"thing" is living or non-living. In such cases a type of judgment comes into play which cannot rely only on the facts because it is just the facts upon which it must decide.

The procedure for answering these questions which Kluckhohn has in mind, of course, is one of co-operative endeavor among all the sciences—sociological, psychological, biological—to determine the minimal needs of human society to sustain itself and to determine what and how the various universals or near-universals contribute to that end. Such a procedure has much to recommend it. Recommending this procedure and accepting it as a decisive answer to the

problem, however, should be distinguished. Actually, it does not penetrate to the core of the relativist's position. As Paul Taylor has pointed out in a recent analysis of Kluckhohn's position, even if such needs are discovered, one is entitled to ask why ought those needs be satisfied and which needs should be emphasized or de-emphasized; that is, man may have a need equally for an outlet for feelings of aggression as for feelings of love and respect. It is just these questions about "ought" and about the priority of needs which the relativist declares cannot be settled by us for anyone else or for any other culture—each must remain free to choose according to his or its own light. To argue that they should decide one way or another because a preponderance of scientific data indicates that man or society must choose in such and such a way in order to survive is of no avail. This is simply another arbitrary fact which one is free to accept or reject, depending probably on one's prior conditioning. Does this point need any greater emphasis than simply the contrast between the sober scientific appraisal of the certain results of nuclear war and the truculence exhibited by both politicians and populaces with respect to international affairs?

Taylor proceeds to draw out the implicit assumptions which are required in order for Kluckhohn's arguments to become genuinely relevant to the moral question involved in the relativist-absolutist dispute. Kluckhohn frequently makes statements like this: "Some needs are so deep and so generic that they are beyond the reach of argument: panhuman morality expresses and supports them." Referring to this tendency, Taylor states: "Perhaps Professor Kluckhohn intends by this that no reasonable, intelligent, and sane human being would disapprove of the fulfillment of such needs and motives, in which case he follows through the theme of rationality which we shall see unifies and underlies his other absolutes." Undoubtedly, this is exactly what Kluckhohn does intend. Throughout his discussion, Kluckhohn assumes that whatever is necessary for life itself gains thereby at least some normative content in the mind of any reasonable person and that moreover such necessities suggest a generalization by which to evaluate cultures. Thus, he often refers approvingly to passages such as this one in Macbeath's work, *Experiments In Living*:

> Any way of life whose general structure or scale of value does not admit of being extended to mankind as a whole, without denying the common humanity of some men and their right to be treated as persons, must be regarded as unsatisfactory; and the more remodelling it needs to make this extension possible, the more unsatisfactory it is.

But the Kantian overtones suggest to us that there is more here than meets the eye. Despite Macbeath's careful and instructive and very persuasive use of empirical materials, he starts and ends with propositions which do not involve a simple reading of the facts, as the following statements indicate:

> The ultimate criterion on which the moral agent proceeds in his judgments, that is, the moral criterion, must be of this kind—self-authenticating, unmediated, containing its evidence within itself—so that a person has only to grasp its nature to recognize its self-evidence. . . . There is one and only one thing which is absolutely and unconditionally good, moral goodness, the goodness of conscientiously doing that which we believe to be right and trying to realize that which we believe to be good.

Even if this view meets the two requirements which Macbeath thinks are essential for an ethical theory, namely, consistency with the moral judgments of mankind everywhere and capacity to explain the diverse moral judgments of different peoples and ages as expressions of the principles which the theory propounds as the moral criteria, one wonders how it will aid us in an empirical crosscultural evaluation of cultures, much less how such a formulation would be *derivable* merely from crosscultural data. Macbeath makes the common division of morality into subjective and objective aspects, the inner aspect being invariable from people to people and the objective one being concerned with the whole of human life. Even if the inner or subjective morality is an empirical psychological invariant, as he claims it is, we might still have difficulty in appreciating its usefulness in evaluating the "objective" morality. The existence of this subjective morality would be comparable to the fact that the human organism requires a certain intake of oxygen—a fact so neutral in character as to be rarely relevant to a discussion of man's behavior. Macbeath's thesis might therefore confirm an ethnocentric position just as well as a crosscultural position. The relativist might quite well accept the proposition that each culture is doing that which it believes to be right and is trying to realize that which it

believes to be good. Certainly in the past each culture has had difficulty in understanding why other cultures continue to deny that which is self-evident to it. Thus, in appealing to Macbeath, it seems to me that Kluckhohn does tacitly accept the presuppositions which Taylor suggests that he holds, which are not so much a refutation of relativist claims as they are evidence of a wholly different philosophical persuasion.

The same tendencies can be traced in some of the other critics of cultural relativism. David Bidney, for instance, is prone to make such remarks as "there have been increasing indications of a growing appreciation of humanistic values"—as against the appreciation of relativistic values. These remarks suggest a difference of values, rather than a disagreement about the facts of culture. Yet Bidney talks frequently as though the issue reduced to the problem of opening the relativist's eyes to certain obvious universals. He obscures the core of the problem when he states: "If cultural progress is a valid and objective ideal, it is the duty of the anthropologist as a student of cultural history and of comparative culture dynamics to co-operate in the common task by indicating some of the conditions for its realization in our own and other cultures." Supposing that we accept cultural progress as a valid ideal, are the facts alone sufficient to indicate what direction cultural progress must take or what goals it should have? Once again there seems a reluctance to announce frankly the underlying assumptions which would make *possible* any answers to these questions.

As things stand currently in the debate between the cultural relativist and the cultural universalist-absolutist, one can forgive the philosopher an occasional smile when he comes across the not infrequent assertion that philosophers have muddled through this problem for centuries and now it is high time for anthropological science with its mass of accumulated empirical data to give a final answer to the question. On the basis of the present discussion, we can see that the current debate is not primarily about facts, since each side pretty much agrees as to the facts, but is, on the contrary, about which kind of *value interpretation* of those facts will be most conducive to ends which each side chooses to think good—the very question with which philosophers have traditionally been concerned.

Nevertheless, this criticism does not deny the importance of the work that has been accomplished by both sides in the debate, nor does it imply that both lines of thought will be equally fruitful in the future. Quite the contrary. Recent anthropological work such as Herskovits' and Kluckhohn's can be most useful either in substantiating or in throwing into question the relevance of the various alternative value systems which are offered to us, whether by cultures or by philosophers. At the same time, the agreement of the anthropologists on one factual question does, in my mind, tip the scales in favor of Kluckhohn's approach over that of Herskovits'. Both sides agree that morality, as a category, is universal—only the content differs. This fact suggests that man cannot escape morality, the necessity of making judgments and choices, no matter how hard he tries. As A. E. Murphy has commented, "Whatever the ground for moral tolerance may be, it cannot possibly be a refusal to take the responsibility for making moral judgments, for it is only in terms of such moral judgments that tolerance—or anything else—can be justified." Since the relativists do make implicit, as well as explicit, value judgments, it seems more consistent, and perhaps more honest, to adopt a method which accepts this necessity, and tries to make such judgment as reasoned and enlightened as possible, rather than to adopt one which views judgment as an unhappy necessity which prevents us from attaining our proper human stature.

The case may be put even more strongly. The cultural relativist is to value theory what the sceptic is to the theory of knowledge. The strength of the relativist position is that all arguments, including his own (if he is consistent), can be used by him to illustrate the truth of his thesis, so that he can never be denied his insinuating doubt. His argument is not, as Bidney and Kluckhohn interpret it, that we do not have enough facts or are not seeing facts clearly enough, but that no amount of mere facts would ever be sufficient to overcome his doubt about their objectivity, their applicability for anyone else. No matter what the facts are, we are sealed in our ethnocentric fortresses, forever alert to the opportunity of turning facts to our own advantage at the expense of the enemy. From a position of thorough-going scepticism, science itself can be viewed only as an additional rationalization of and support for beliefs which are either "revealed," "sacred," or "self-evident."

The other position, it seems to me, once its presuppositions are made explicit, and given the practical *necessity* for making some sort of judgment anyway, constitutes a much more consistent and coherent means for ordering and explaining our world—a system which could be at least partially confirmed (or disconfirmed) by the continuing growth of scientific evidence. On this point Taylor has perhaps somewhat overstated his case when he says, "Universality is *entirely irrelevant* to the dispute about whether there are absolute, crosscultural moral norms, and if there are, what they could be" (my emphasis). To my mind, it is reasonable to suppose that, although universals cannot pretend to the moral authority which absolutes presumably have, there is undoubtedly an important correlation between the two, so that a morality which flew in the face of obvious biological and psychological facts would be generally less persuasive and less desirable. Though such a morality would not be "disproven" thereby, it could certainly be made to appear quite irrelevant. Universals lend psychological and biological, if not logical, support for assuming certain absolutes, both in theory and in practice, or, at least, for investing universals with the imperative force of absolutes. As Kluckhohn puts it "If, in spite of biological variation and historical and environmental diversities, we find these congruences [universals], is there not a presumptive likelihood that moral principles somehow correspond to inevitabilities, given the nature of the human organism and the human situation?" Certainly since Kant most philosophers have increasingly measured their ethical system in terms of such a presumption.

Guided by this conviction, anthropologists (as well as the other social scientists) will be led to the task for which they are best suited, namely, to develop a methodology for handling crosscultural values in which the presuppositions of the method will be clearly stated. The minimal presupposition must certainly be that the scientific method has relevance for all cultures. There would also have to be philosophical presuppositions justifying the use of scientific methodology in terms of certain goals and needs. Such a methodology would be open to the criticism of a certain amount of circularity or question-begging. As has been indicated, this is probably unavoidable. The gains of establishing some basis for evaluation of cultural values, however, far outweight the inevitable prejudice done to certain

values to be studied. And, of course, continuous effort can and must be made to minimize that prejudice. A more crucial and controversial presupposition must be that scientists accept the responsibility of indicating those cultural patterns or responses or institutions which have been or tend to be inimical to the realization or fulfillment of crosscultural universals. Any pronouncements in this area should of course be made with full recognition of the fact that the many uncontrollable variables of cultural life leave such pronouncements far short of the predictive certainty of Newtonian law. But humility should not be allowed to undermine the important role of responsible generalizations made on the basis of serious scientific endeavor.

To be sure, such a crosscultural project requires a nice and continuing regard for the difficulties in *perceiving*, much less manipulating, values. Kluckhohn has discussed many of these problems in his essay in the Parsons and Shils' volume, *Toward a General Theory of Action*. While carefully seeking to avoid the confusion of identifying values with needs, Kluckhohn emphasizes the complexity of dealing with values because they are so interrelated with needs and other factors operating in the culture.

> Since a value is a complex proposition involving cognition, approval, selection, and effect, then the relationship between a value system and a need or goal system is necessarily complex. Values *both* rise from and create needs. A value serves several needs, inhibits others partially, half meets and half blocks still others.

He concludes that only a broad co-operative endeavor of all the social and biological sciences will sufficiently untangle value from its other cultural wrappings to enable social scientists to study value in its own right.

Ralph Linton shares a similar concern over the problem of simply recognizing and identifying cultural values in his essay, "The Problem of Universal Values." As a starting point, Linton formulates as value-free a definition of value as he can without making it, he hopes, valueless: "[value is] anything capable of producing similar choice responses in several of a society's members." Whether or not there is anything of value in this definition, the reader may decide for himself. More interesting is his subdivision of values into two broad categories, conceptual and instrumental values: conceptual values being those which are universal, such as modesty, and instru-

mental values being those which attach to particular modes of expression within various cultures, such as loincloths and bikinis. Instrumental values are naturally extremely variable. Under many conditions, the instrumental values supplant or displace conceptual values altogether in the conscious life of a culture. Certainly it is only by considerable cerebral effort that we can, I think, connect the bikini with modesty.

Among universal values which Linton discusses in both their conceptual and instrumental forms are religious, social, family, economic, political, and knowledge values.* He admits that agreement about the existence of these values does not resolve the problem of crosscultural evaluation. In fact, when conceptual values have long given way to instrumental values, the instrumental values acquire just that heavy emotional coloring which makes objectivity so difficult.

> The values whose contravention brings the sharpest and most immediate response are those at the instrumental level. Thus two societies which share the same basic conceptual value may fail to realize the fact because of their different ways of implementing it. The best answer would seem to be to bring the conceptual values into consciousness, a difficult task.

Just how difficult (and painful) such a process might be may be foreshadowed by noticing most Americans' reaction to the suggestion that Russia and the United States share certain conceptual values—for instance, that of efficiency. Granted that the crux of our differences hinges on implementation of means, it is nevertheless true that when the differences are viewed as instrumental rather than conceptual those differences no longer seem quite as desperate, quite as violent, quite as hopeless of any amelioration or compromise.

One way in which this task of which Linton speaks might be accomplished has been suggested in a recent study by John Ladd. Restricting himself solely to the ethical discourse of Navaho moralists and exercising great care in establishing his definitions and gen-

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*The American scholar can take solace (or perhaps find cause for further despair) in Linton's findings on knowledge values: "The attitudes of societies towards such accumulation of 'unprofitable' knowledge vary profoundly. In general, the individuals who possess it are regarded with a mixture of admiration and contempt. The scholar is everywhere officially honored and unofficially starved."

eral procedure, Ladd attempts to reconstruct the formal and logical structure of the Navaho moral code. Most ethical discourse naturally concerns instrumental values, but by using the moralist (who is supposedly more reflective and probing) as a subject, Ladd indicates a way in which conceptual values (which in Ladd's terminology are basic prescriptions, existential grounds, and ground motives) may be more quickly uncovered. Ladd succeeds in his attempt at reconstruction, although his results must be further tested before they can be taken as established. Admittedly, Ladd's procedure is narrow in scope and lacks the detail necessary for a full examination of a value system, such as might be achieved by the co-operative effort argued for by Kluckhohn. But it is a procedure which requires a minimum of apparatus and workers and which does provide a basis for empirical testing and experimentation. Such an analytical technique focuses our attention quite vividly on the possible areas of understanding and on the difficult problems of communicating in any matter of crosscultural significance. As Ladd sees it,

> Insofar as the problem of disputability is concerned, the study of descriptive ethics may prove invaluable, since it can help us to discover those basic presuppositions which we share in common with other peoples and so enable us to determine the potentialities as well as the limits of justifying argumentation that is possible with them.

As more and more scientists and philosophers perceive the inefficacy and inconsistencies of the older relativist position, there will undoubtedly be an increasing experimentation with various techniques, such as Ladd's, designed to expose the structure of cultural values and ethical codes. The desideratum of the relativist's case should be that we remain intellectually vigilant against ethnocentric complacency, continually critical of our conclusions and suspicious of our intentions. But relativism as such is no longer of primary concern. Abraham Edel maintains in his book, *Ethical Judgment: The Use of Science in Ethics*, that "the issue is not whether abolition of all [relativity] is possible, but whether it can be sufficiently reduced to provide standards for major choices of direction." The search for cultural universals is nothing more than such an effort and is entirely in keeping with the trend of scientific discovery which has transformed every other phase of human activity. The universals uncovered by men like Kluckhohn, Linton, and G. P. Murdock strongly

encourage the belief that this search is not simply based on a witless, arbitrary hope but on the reasoned conviction that there is a demonstrable order and a significant basis for crosscultural understanding in the seeming chaos of competing cultures.

But our scientific knowledge does not put us on the side of the angels. In the conflict of cultures, the decision will rest on the actually existing cultural values, and not all values can or will maintain an equal place in the sun. As Edel points out:

> Although many of the differences among men may come to be seen in terms of permissible individual or cultural variation, others may involve a choice between interests in which deep values are lost whatever the direction taken. Sacrifice, tragedy in a multitude of forms, incalculable moral tension, not only have existed but will continue to exist in the lives of men.

Aided by the efforts of crosscultural anthropological science, we can do our share in avoiding the final tragedy of which C. Wright Mills speaks by refusing to accept slavishly our own moral code while failing to perceive such basic similarities as may exist between our code and another antagonistic code. A moral code subject to vigorous scrutiny and continuous comparison with competing systems may be the most likely source of guidance out of the present frightening impasse, at least if man's reason and knowledge count for anything in human affairs.

San Francisco Peninsula

By ERNEST KROLL

Air was the darkened room
In which it lay, reclining
On a bed of seas
Upon its side in human guise,
Most like the undulating
Silhouette of woman,
Warm and at her ease
Beside the sash to catch
The breeze, which breathed
The fog across the sill
As a summer curtain in.

Nothing to Lose

By JAMES C. Y. SHEN

■ I don't know whether this ever happened to you—I mean, you think of a person and all you can see in your mind's eye is the face of another. It can be very annoying. Now when the person you think of is your father and the face that appears in your mind is that of someone else, that can be perfectly maddening. It gives you a sense of guilt. For some time now, whenever I think of my father, for all the world I can't quite recall him. All I can see is Liu Ta's roguish face, Liu Ta's ridiculous hands. . . .

I knew Liu Ta from way back.

As far as I can remember, he was always somewhere around. As far as I can remember, Father was always saying something not very complimentary about Liu Ta the man. "Oh, he is tricky. Unless you watch out, he'll trick you out of your shirt"—this was the refrain that rang from Father's lips whenever Liu was mentioned. And he was always mentioned. Not only that; he was always going in and out of our house, always with something in a blue cloth bundle under his arm, constantly wringing his startlingly effeminate hands with their long tapering fingers—utterly incongruous with his fat face and rotund body—smiling his sycophantic smile, humming and hawing, loudly drinking his tea, sharing our meals, picking his crooked teeth, burping noisily in the middle of a conversation or meal. A most

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ill-mannered man, who got easily excited and in his excitement tended to stutter. His oily face would flush scarlet, his jaws working crazily, and one felt he would surely choke.

Yet, whatever our opinion of him as a man, when it came to business, Father would deal with none but Liu Ta. "That scoundrel knows his business," he would say, "better than anybody this side of the Yellow River. Even in Peking you couldn't find more than a couple these days who know the business as much as he does. Oh, yes, I have to give it to him. A superb craftsman. A master. There can be no doubt about that. He not only understands papers and tools, he feels deeply about them. To him they are not dead lifeless things, but something immensely alive. Didn't you notice his slender hands? They don't handle; they feel, they caress. Give him a brush, a pail of paste, and all the things he needs for his job, and he'll perform wonders. He could bring out the full flavor and individuality of paper and make the most of it. Where individuality is lacking, he could create individuality. He could make papers look ancient or modern, sad or gay, friendly or hostile, chaste or bawdy, sincere or hypocritical. He could make them stupid, buffoonish, saucy, cruel, innocent, or worldly. He could make them sit, stand, or dance. Ah, he is a genius when it comes to papers. Look at the scrolls he has made for me! They are perfect in craftsmanship. None—yes, none—could match him in craftsmanship."

As far as I can remember, Liu Ta was the only person outside our family who could barge in on Father whenever he felt like doing so—early in the morning before breakfast or late at night near bedtime. Father was always ready to receive him. Not only that, there was always an excitement in the way Father greeted him. "Ah Tang," he would order one of our many servants, "show that scoundrel in!" and drop whatever he was doing at that particular moment. When Liu Ta appeared, he would fairly jump up and ask, pointing at the bundle under Liu's arm, "What have you got there today? Show me. Show me right away!"

Not only great as a framer of paintings and calligraphy, Liu Ta also, as an art dealer, had an encylopedic knowledge of artists, dead or living, and an infallible eye for the genuine or counterfeit. In this beautiful, wealthy, and historic Lake City of Hangchow, not far from Shanghai—mentioned by Marco Polo as a center of culture and seri-culture—where there were many families known for their

illustrious past and their collections of bronze, paintings, calligraphy, ink slabs, sculptures, books and seals, Liu Ta knew exactly who had what. He could rattle off the things the Wong or Chang or Chao family possessed.

Perhaps this was a major reason why Father did not—at least he acted that way—trust the man a hundred per cent. Liu Ta knew too much about him and his family. And he depended too much on Liu.

Father's family was one of the wealthiest in the city, and he belonged to that class of gentlemen of leisure which thrived in the nineteen twenties, and rapidly declined in the nineteen thirties and forties. Today, under the Communists, this class is as dead and as much a thing of the past as dragons. In their heyday they lived like princes, with more money than they knew how to spend and with a fine taste for literature and art—descendants of great scholars and important officials under the Manchu dynasty. Most of these people were themselves scholars and artists, deeply steeped in the traditional culture. Had they lived under the Manchu dynasty, they with their vast knowledge of the Confucian classics would have acquired more wealth and glory for their families. But under the Republic they were as out of element as men in space. The Golden Throne was no more; the very kingpin had been knocked out of their world. Barring a restoration of the throne, the next best thing for them was to divorce themselves from a world which was becoming increasingly alien. Thus for years they maintained a splendid isolation.

They lived in mansions with four or more courtyards. Most had concubines. They drank ginseng soup, played mahjong, and surrounded themselves with hirelings and parasites. Many smoked opium. Their expenditures were heavy, very heavy, but they were not to be bothered by monetary matters and day-to-day trivialities. And most of them were not practical. In their impracticality they could usually turn out an exquisite poem at a moment's notice, but if you wanted them to go out into the street for a bag of peanuts or a roast sweet potato, they would get hopelessly lost in five minutes. It was a dream world they lived in, barricaded and padlocked with gilded unrealities and fond illusions—decadent and rapidly fading before their very eyes.

Father was moderate in many things. He did not acquire any concubine, though Mother urged him to, this being the thing for

men like him to do. He did not smoke, nor gamble. Though fond of fine wines, he never over-drank. He loved good food but was no glutton.

Art objects were his obsession. For them he was ready to spend any amount of money and effort. They were his life and career. He worshipped Art. Of his collection he took infinite care. In his jealous possessiveness he was very much like a passionate chess player watching and anticipating every move made by an opponent. Only in this business of art collecting, the opponents were legion. Father watched and studied every move made by fellow collectors.

And he leaned heavily on Liu Ta for information, for arranging deals as well as for taking proper care of his precious scrolls. Because Liu Ta was in great demand, Father paid dear for his services, never haggling and always paying whatever was asked for and more. But behind Liu's back he constantly complained about Liu's cupidity. "I can't stand him! I can't stand him any more! He is getting increasingly avaricious. He cares for nothing but money. After all these years, one would think there would be some loyalty on his part. Imagine the amount of money he has robbed from me all these years! From a poor devil he has grown fat and prosperous. And largely thanks to me! But do you think he has a single particle of gratitude in him? None! None whatever!"

And he swore to cut all relations with Liu Ta. But next morning when Liu Ta called with his blue cloth bundle under his arm, Father would greet him, as eager as ever.

This was the relationship between Father and Liu Ta. There was continuous grumbling on Father's part about the amount of money he had to pay for Liu's services and about Liu's lack of loyalty and gratitude, but Liu was always around, with his ridiculously white and slender hands, his ridiculously fat face and belly, burping, stuttering, and loudly whispering.

"He will be our ruin yet!" Mother said, echoing Father's sentiments.

Thus years went by, until the Japanese occupied the coastal cities of Shanghai, Hangchow, and Nanking in 1937.

Under the Japanese pressure, millions of people moved from the coastal regions to China's vast hinterland. However, few of these

people belonged to the world Father did. People of his world could not forgive the Kuomintang for the revolution which destroyed the source of their power and glory. Truly, some of them regarded the Japanese sweep southward as Heaven-sent retribution for the wrongs the Kuomintang had done them. Thus, while people around them were planning to leave or leaving, most of them stayed, telling themselves and other people, "We are not politicians. We are common people. Why should the Japanese bother us?"

There were practical considerations, too. Most of these people, in their fifties or sixties, after a life of isolation, were hardly fit to face the harsh realities of the times. Moreover, all their property and interests were along the coast. To give up their vested interests was unthinkable. As Father put it, "To pull up our roots, to give up security for a wandering life and a very uncertain future—that is sheer madness. It's all very well for a Kuomintang official or a rootless person without a job or property to glorify patriotism and promote the 'scorched-earth policy' and urge people to go inland. What do they have to lose? When they scorch the earth, whose houses and property do they destroy? Certainly not theirs!"

So Father stayed. So we stayed.

I remember vividly the first day of occupation. It was a gloomy day. Black, swollen, autumn clouds swirled over the beautiful Inner West Lake, of which I had an excellent view from my bedroom windows. The first thing Father did that day was order the removal of the big paper lantern, which had hung over the front door for long, long years with the two big arrogant characters "Ting Residence" written on it in brilliant vermilion. "We must not attract too much attention," he emphasized. Then he ordered that the front door be closed and nobody leave or enter the house till "things settled down a bit."

But, of course, he reckoned without Liu Ta. Scarcely had we sat down for breakfast, when we heard—across the courtyards—loud knocks on the front door. Father started, paling slightly, and laid down his chopsticks and bowl of rice gruel, half rising. "Who is it? Who is it?"

Ah Tang announced it was Liu Ta at the door.

"Liu Ta! What is he doing out in the streets on a day like this?" Father asked, and picked up his chopsticks and ordered Ah Tang to

let Liu Ta in. "Just open a crack. Then close it tight." And ordered that a bowl and pair of chopsticks be bought for Liu Ta.

When Liu Ta appeared, Father cried out, "You fool, what are you doing out in the streets on a day like this? Don't you know this city is under occupation? You should have stayed home—that's where you properly belong on a day like this!" And his eyes automatically looked for the customary blue cloth bundle under Liu's arm. But for once there was no bundle. "It's insane for you," he continued, "to go out into the streets on a day like this!"

Liu Ta wrung his hands and said, "I am a poor old man. What do I have to lose? The Japanese do not have two heads and four hands. They don't eat people. . . ."

"They may not eat people. But they kill and rape. . . ."

"But who wants to rape me?" Liu Ta chortled.

Mother rose from the table, obviously disgusted with Liu Ta. But, being a genteel lady, she murmured something in apology. But Liu was busy chortling, waving his chopsticks, repeating, "Who wants to rape me?"

For a while both Father and Liu concentrated on eating, Liu making considerable noise sucking in the gruel and relishing the tidbits from the various dishes on the table. "You see," Liu said, "I couldn't very well afford to stay home. *We* haven't hoarded any rice. We haven't hoarded anything at all. . . ."

"Haven't hoarded anything at all! You fool! Didn't I tell you to do so?" In our house enough rice—of two grades: one for my parents and the children, and the other for the hirelings—had been hoarded to last the household of twelve people for at least two years. Then there was a roomful of dry goods and non-perishable eatables. "What did you do with all your money? You have certainly earned enough. What did you do with all your money?"

"Remember, I have a large family."

"For this you have only yourself to blame! One concubine is more than enough. But you have to have two. With a wife, two concubines, and eight children. . . ."

"Nine," Liu corrected.

". . . and nine children to support, no wonder you never have enough money!"

When Liu Ta left, he left with money in his pocket and a bundle of dry goods under his arm.

Now the lake-side park became a drill ground for Japanese soldiers. One morning I woke up to strange sounds. Looking out of the window, I saw soldiers brandish wooden sticks in some sort of a match, barking at one another in their strange language. Until we moved, I was to wake up each morning to this barking and brandishing in the park across the street. At night you heard saber-rattling gendarmes going their round and the sudden coughs of machine guns or spasmodic rifle shots in the direction of the far-off hills where guerrillas were said to be active. Occupation had its unique sounds, odors, scenes, and atmosphere.

Now for the first time in his life, Father became worried about money. The currency change was a severe blow. Worse was the fact that thousands of acres of land, on which the family mainly depended for yearly income, yielding large quantities of rice and mulberry leaves so vital to the region's silk industry, had fallen behind guerrilla areas. The main source of our revenue was gone.

Expenditures had to be cut, drastically cut. The first step in this direction was to reduce the number of people to be fed in the household. The steward left us first. Other hirelings followed, till only Ah Tang remained.

Then I began to hear discussions about selling our house. It was too large, too expensive to maintain. One day Liu Ta said that the puppet Mayor of Nanking was interested in our house. . . . Not long afterward we sold our house. We moved into a small one in a narrow lane in the old residential quarters of the city, far from the lakes, far from all the scenes the city is famous for.

Liu Ta visited us as usual—with his blue cloth bundle under his arm. But behind his back Father's comments on him became increasingly caustic. A scoundrel, an ingrate—Liu Ta was all these and more. "Now the Japanese have money and power. So the best things go to them. To me he shows only inferior things these days," Father complained.

It was bitter—ah, bitter—that he, who once had unlimited funds, could no longer afford to buy art objects.

The Sino-Japanese War dragged on. Then the war in the Pacific.

The initial successes were spectacular. Then it, too, bogged down. Both wars—now one global war—did not go the way the Japanese planned and wanted.

Inflation galloped. Ready cash, any amount of it, had a way of melting like snow in water. As if inflation were not enough to make life desperate, things started to happen in our house. First, a fire in the kitchen, destroying most of the things we had hoarded. Then my brother had acute appendicitis. Then a burglary.

"It's an unlucky house! It's an unlucky house!" Father muttered. And because Liu Ta was instrumental in arranging the sale of the old house and the purchase of this new, it was felt that Liu Ta had brought on all this unluckiness.

Then Mother had an accident and broke her hip and was hospitalized. There was immediate chaos in the house. Father, who had never involved himself in day-to-day household affairs, was helpless and lost. Liu Ta stepped into the breach and took care of this and that. One day he mentioned that the wife of a high Japanese official was looking for precious stones. Perhaps. . . . So jewels which had been in our family for generations were taken out of lacquer boxes and turned into ready cash for daily expenditures.

Mother stayed in the hospital for two months. And it took another month for her to get well enough to move around.

Then—to cap it all—Father had a stroke. His speech and half of his body were affected. This was the beginning of an illness that dragged on for half a year.

Father was taken home after a month in the hospital. His mind was clear and he could move one hand, so he communicated with us by writing. The moment he came back, he asked for his favorite scrolls. For the next few months it was my job—twice or thrice a day—to get what he asked for, unroll it, and hold it for him to look at and enjoy.

One day Liu Ta asked to speak to Mother alone. He wrung his hands, hummed and hawed. "I know—urh—I know I am bringing up a very unpleasant subject. But I have been approached by a very high occupation official. He is willing to pay very high. . . ."

Mother cut him short. "Liu Ta, if you are thinking of buying my husband's art objects for your Japanese friend"—she emphasized the word "friend"—"you are wasting your breath and my time. Our

collection is not for sale, not any of it. You, of all people, should know how my husband feels about his collection! He would rather die than sell his scrolls. I warn you not to say one word—not one single word—about your Japanese friend's offer in his presence!"

Liu Ta said: "All upstarts, puppets as well as Japanese, are collecting these days. They are collecting everything. Partly because they want nice things to impress people, but largely because art objects are good to invest in. Their value goes up hourly and daily. So all upstarts are collecting. But there are not enough art objects to go around. Good art objects nowadays fetch handsome, very handsome, prices. The Wong family, the Chow family—practically all the families having anything at all—are selling to keep their stomachs full. They are selling a few items at a time, to get just enough money to tide them over for a few days at a time. It would be foolish to sell a whole collection at one time. . . ."

Mother said impatiently, "Enough of that, Liu Ta. Our financial conditions are desperate. We do need money badly. You know that very well. But we are not selling our collection, not any of it! Do you hear? Not any of it! Now you go back to your Japanese friend and tell him we are not selling."

Liu Ta started to say something, his lips fluttering desperately, his face reddening as if he were choking. But Mother had walked out on him.

The number of things salable for quick cash was limited. For some time Mother had been calling in furriers. Now all the good furs were gone. There was precious little else we could sell.

At this critical juncture, Father wrote on a piece of paper, "Sell my collection. But don't trust Liu Ta!" He underscored the words "don't trust." I don't know whether this decision to sell was made because Father had heard from Ah Tang about Liu Ta's offer, or because Liu Ta himself had talked, or because Father in his bed had fully realized it was now a choice between starvation and collection.

For two days Mother held out loyally. Father wrote again, "Sell, sell, don't be a fool!"

That day Mother sent me to Liu Ta. After all, there was little choice between one art dealer and another. One was as dishonest as another, Mother figured.

Liu Ta was busy in his shop. But when he saw me he laid down his brush and exclaimed, "So you have come to your senses! After all, one can't live on false pride!"

I spat hatefully, "Here is a chance for you to make some money from a dying man!"

His face flushed. He started to say something but changed his mind. Instead, he waved me on into a den. He spread a piece of paper on a bench, dipped a brush into a pail of paste, and ran it rapidly over the paper several times. Then he laid down the brush. "Now, watch," he said, stooping to scratch with a finger nail at the edge of the paper. "See how one could—with skill, patience, and luck—yes, luck—separate this kind of paper into two layers?" He split a corner of the paper.

I said, "Mother is waiting for you to talk business. We are eager to know whether your Japanese friend is still interested in Father's collection."

"My Japanese friend? Why, he still is. Very much so," Liu Ta replied heartily, wringing his hands. "You know he is rich, very rich. You have heard of the Mitsui family, haven't you? He belongs to that family. He is rich, very rich." Liu Ta had a way of repeating himself in a most exasperatingly tedious manner. "He has a practically inexhaustible amount of money to spend on art objects. And he is crazy about Chinese art. He has heard of your father's collection. Who hasn't? He is dying to buy the whole lot. You know, he is so rich he could afford to pay practically any amount. Yes, he is so rich"—he wrung his hands convulsively—"that he *thinks* he could buy anything and everything."

"Shall we go?" I asked impatiently.

"Go? Where? Oh, yes, yes, to your house. So you have decided to sell your father's scrolls. So now you want to sell. A very wise decision. A pity, too. Let me tell you something. Every art collection—great art collection like your father's, that is—is a living thing. Your father has built it up cell by cell, tissue by tissue, bone by bone. He has given it a body and a soul. He has given it *his own body and his own soul*. It is his life. Now to sell it would be like selling his flesh and blood. To sell it item by item would be like tearing his body apart limb by limb, bit by bit. A very messy thing, a very horrible thing to do. Like sawing somebody apart." He kept on wring-

ing his hands convulsively, and I wished to Heaven that he would stop doing so.

He looked at me narrowly and laid a hand on my shoulder. "Perhaps you don't understand me. What a pity that you don't! What I mean is that there are some wonderful things in your father's collection. They are treasures, national treasures. Each should fetch a fortune. A fortune!"

He cleared his throat and spat on the ground. "Now let me tell you a secret. Many scrolls in your father's collection are of this kind of paper." He picked up the paper from the bench. "With patience, skill, and luck one could separate each into two layers. If you couldn't, well, no harm is done. Is there? Now the first layer is the original. The second layer? You may also call it original. But a shadowy original—sometimes very shadowy. You have to touch it up—and this is the tough, real tough, part of the whole job. To touch it up so it would approximate the first layer—this takes great talent, it takes genius." He burped loudly. "And I"—he pointed at his chest with a thumb—"can do it. I have done it. And if I botch the job, again no harm is done. We'll still have the first layer, the original. What do we have to lose?" He stopped wringing his hands and looked at them critically. "As they say, there is everything to gain and nothing to lose."

During the next few weeks, Liu Ta worked furiously on a number of scrolls in Father's collection. Luck was with him—and us. Liu Ta took infinite pains over the second layers. When finished and framed, they looked wonderful.

The Mitsui fellow became our regular visitor—up to almost the end of the war. He was shown one or two items at a time, and he paid handsome prices.

Father did not learn what Liu Ta did until he recovered. And he was deeply ashamed of the whole business. "That's unethical! That's unethical! I told you he is a bag of tricks. If given half a chance, he'll trick you out of your shirt. Oh, that scoundrel! That scoundrel!"

Ant Farm

By BARRISS MILLS

The narrow box, plastic,
clear, with two-dimensional
green house and barn and tree,
is half filled with sand
and inhabited by eight
worker ants (queens
are not permitted to be sent
through the mails).

Day through, with pauses
for eating and rest (poised
in the very attitudes of work), they move
the unwieldy rocks from place
to narrow place, tunneling
and piling as the children watch.

Work's bred in them. It seems
not to matter there's no queen
to lay eggs in the minutely
fashioned hollows. Or perhaps
they infer a Great Ant-Mother
beyond their tiny travellings.

Someone bumps the table, and hills
and tunnels collapse. Earthquake
gives them pause (they wait
till equilibrium is restored)—
but not the work to be done
over. They're undaunted
by cataclysm and one
of their number buried under stones.

Barriss Mills's last appearance on these pages was in the Fall '57 issue. He teaches English at Purdue University and has published two volumes of verse.

The carrying, long journeying,
and strict placing begin again
as though nothing had happened—
as though a Queen and a future
for work-ants waits beyond
this little universe of transparent
and green plastic, and sand.

Child Christmas

By WARREN KLIEWER

Christmas began just off the German Sea
With Siegfried camped east of the Elbe River,
Shouting a curse that made Weland shiver,
Vowing to sever hub from axletree,
Coal from forge, anvil from block, thigh from knee,
To quench in snow both firebrand and firegiver,
To tear out and chew blood-raw Weland's liver:
That day god nailed mortal to a fir tree.
So much for Germans. Greeks told a Bacchic fable
Accounting for a few more of the facts.
Was there a third? a tale of love and stable?
Of mule and virgin? godman and head tax?
Or has a beast mixed blood with alien beast?
Is this the natural child of West and East?

WARREN KLIEWER, who teaches English at Earlham College, has published stories and verse, as well as criticism, in several literary magazines. He was co-editor of *Kansas Renaissance: An Anthology of Contemporary Kansas Writing*, published in 1961.

Lake Catemaco

By DIONIS COFFIN RIGGS

In coves between
The giant eucalyptus trees,
Where ferns were green,
And vines grew tall,
With flowers like small,
Red bells with yellow tongues,
And pink begonias grew wild
Among the rocks, we saw them.

We followed carefully,
Wanting to catch their whiteness
With the camera,
Their clean white wings
Against the dark green leafage
Of the trees,
Their slim, white necks
Against the blue of sky, or water.

From one green, flowery cove
Into another one they moved,
Then flew away into a greater danger.
We heard a shot,
And saw a white egret
With a dripping spot
Of bright blood, red
On the feathers of its breast.

DIONIS COFFIN RIGGS comes from Martha's Vineyard, is the mother of three daughters who write, and is the co-author, with her husband, of *From Off Island*, a biography of her grandmother. Her poems have appeared in a variety of magazines and newspapers.

Mark Twain in Australia

By COLEMAN O. PARSONS

■ When men from the antipodes came to Hartford with invitations to lecture in Australia, Mark Twain was genially evasive: "I'll call over to your place some day." With the collapse of the publishing firm of Charles L. Webster & Co., the humorist began to take his promise seriously. If he started talking again for money and wrote another travel book, he could shrink his indebtedness. R. S. Smythe, manager of such "lecturing lions" as Archibald Forbes, Max O'Rell, and Stanley of Darkest Africa, offered a satisfactory contract, and Twain began "the longest lecturing tour on record," from North America to South Africa by way of Australasia and India.

On the brink of sixty, Mark Twain had passed the creative peak on which he cavorted from 1869 to 1884, from *The Innocents Abroad* to *Huckleberry Finn*. But as business and other involvements diffused his literary energy, his reputation as a lecturer kept growing at home and his personal popularity cut across national frontiers until it was worldwide. As a traveler, Mark Twain had done the Mississippi and the West, the Holy Land, the Black Forest and the Alps, writing them up in their turn. And now he was ready to do the world and write it up, too.

The 3300-ton ship "Warrimoo" bore Twain, his wife Livy, and his daughter Clara across the Pacific in three weeks, from Vancouver to Sydney. Then Twain did Australia as sightseer, entertainer, and

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A professor of English at The City College, New York, COLEMAN O. PARSONS has published articles on Mark Twain in the *Virginia Quarterly Review* and *American Literature*. He is now on sabbatical leave in Edinburgh, writing a book on the supernatural in the Waverly Novels.

favorite guest from September 16, 1895, to January 4, 1896, with time out from October 31 to December 17 for a swing through New Zealand's North and South Islands.

The professional itinerary can be briefly traced. In Sydney, he gave four performances of his informal and varied talk, "At Home with Mark Twain." Going on to Melbourne, he gave five At Homes before being confined with a bedfellow who had dogged his steps from Elmira, N.Y. Twain had jested to members of the Yorick Club, "I am entertaining a carbuncle unawares. I have got it on my port hind leg, and it reminds me of its company occasionally. I have a greater respect for it than for any other possession I have in the world. I take more care of it than I do of the family." The constitutional upset, the creeping inflamation, the tightening yellow core, the discharge, and the mortification were relieved—for a time—by Dr. Fitzgerald's lancet and "an opium hypodermic." Placed on parole by his "very latest humour," Mark could quip that his Pullman-carbuncle restricted sightseeing pretty much to the bedchamber: "The study of wall-paper patterns, even if they are various, is not hilarious enjoyment." After smuggling his bothersome companion over the border into South Australia, he ruefully confessed, "It sits on me like the nation; it keeps quiet awhile, but at times it gathers itself together and gives an almighty hard twist. It's pretty vigorous."

Adelaide was given a whirlwind season of four At Homes which exceeded Mark's triumphs in the two larger provincial capitals. Then he began to move even more rapidly through a kaleidoscope of sights and a procession of events that took him to Horsham, Stawell, Ballarat, Bendigo, and Maryborough, goldmining and agricultural towns which monotonously insisted on official welcomes before escorting the worn celebrity on tours of main streets and public institutions.

Melbourne was set laughing again, and the nearby towns of Prahran and Geelong gave Mark their shillings and, for future platform use, their names:

> Lo! there is a Geelong,
> Where the righteous belong;
> And there is a Prahran,
> Where they don't give a ——.

Pretending to forget the clinching rhyme, Mark would search eagerly in his notebook—only to find that the monosyllable was missing.

On his return from Tasmania and New Zealand, Twain managed to be At Home once more in Sydney and Melbourne and to take a side trip to Scone in order to keep an "audience in a simmer of laughter." He left Sydney on the Peninsular and Oriental mail steamer "Oceana," and enjoyed shore leave at Melbourne and Adelaide and a view of Albany from King George's Sound before rounding Cape Leeuwin into the Indian Ocean.

Australians were less interested in Mark Twain as a traveler than as a talker whose notions could be tapped by newsmen. At first Mark felt his way cautiously. American journalists, with whom he was most familiar, questioned too personally about money earned, meals eaten, and the size of a man's biceps, suggested "attractive replies," and then quoted recklessly. He soon found that colonial reporters bore less resemblance to banditti—in fact, could be "as truthful as *Hansard*."

Interviewers usually encountered "the most original jester of the age" in a private parlor of his hotel. But he was sometimes tracked down in the bar, in his bedroom, or on the deck of a ship. To one pressman he remarked through an ambience of smoke, "I think interviewing as an institution is good enough where the man under torture has something to confess, and the torturer knows how to worry it out of him. Now I haven't got much to reveal."

What he did reveal among other things was a distrust of prohibition in America and Australia. Despite Sunday dry laws in Sydney and Melbourne, "I, a stranger, can see . . . that the most inveterate boozer can get all he wants while he is able to pay for it. . . . Instead of open honest drinking, you have sly boozing . . . under the most demoralizing conditions." The outcome of all this absurdity was "contempt for law in general . . . smuggling, and informing and perjury." The thing was to guide the "human propensity" as beneficently as matrimony rectified fornication. Burke was right, "Lawful indulgence is the only check on illicit gratification." Then Mark pledged "confusion to teetotalism" in a whisky *cocktail* (hot whisky without sugar). Convinced that the regular mixture disagreed with

him, Mark "swore off" both the sugar and the lemon and thus discovered that unadulterated whisky is "one of the most harmless as well as the most agreeable of beverages."

As Twain "talked without ceasing," one thing suggested another. His apology to Oliver Wendell Holmes for unconsciously plagiarizing a dedication kindled the reflection: "I fancy that we remember things in cycles. Some people's memories are bottomless. Mine is like a basket with a hole in the bottom. Most things tumble through, but now and then one sticks there in the most unexpected way."

About modern fiction Mark Twain said he knew little, preferring history, biography, and travel. "I have always had a fear that I should get into someone else's style if I dabbled among the modern writers too much, and I don't want to do that. As I have never studied any of the great models, I can outrage them all with impunity." A favorite modern was Rudyard Kipling, whose "Mandalay" and "Tommy" he quoted. "The Eastern ballads have an aroma of the Orient, haven't they? You seem to smell the sandalwood and the lines have a swing and go—there is a snapper at the end of every one of them."

Of one former crony he spoke with bitter gusto: "Bret Harte I consider sham and shoddy, and he has no pathos of the real true kind. . . . There should be no pathos which does not come out of a man's heart. He has no heart, except his name, and I consider that he has produced nothing that is genuine. He is artificial. That opinion, however, must be taken with some allowance, for . . . I do not care for the man." These extempore remarks set off a chain explosion of protest which detonated throughout Australia and crossed the Tasman Sea to New Zealand. The concensus was: Rather "bad form to say the least of it . . . to slang-wang a rival funny man" in that spiteful fashion! Under this barrage, Twain pulled in his critical horns. In Adelaide, he countered another question on the subject: "Let that drop; it was one of those hasty things I had no business to have said, and it should never have appeared. If one criticises a man, one should do it thoroughly."

Although never eager to discuss his own books or lectures, Mark did answer a question about his favorite Twain book, "Well, I think *Huckleberry Finn*." He was not much of an authority, though. "The

details of my books go clean off my memory a few weeks after I have written them." One thing he remembered was getting *A Connecticut Yankee* out in a hurry and selling "a comparatively limited edition of 35,000 to 40,000 copies" at a high price. Of all his books, it had the greatest chance of survival because "some very powerful political and social lessons are cleverly interleaved with the satire of the story." It should be "a power . . . in the democratic colonies of Australia." His reading public generally was holding up well, so that his income, "year in and year out," was predictable and unfluctuating. "That is what distresses one—when one's income begins to fluctuate, because if it gets started it can so easily fluctuate the wrong way, and it might fluctuate a man out of his bread and buttter."

While Melbourne journalists were harvesting Mark's autumnal wisdom, Mrs. Clemens sat by, lost in a yellow-back novel. This report shocked reverencers of greatness, so much so that the faraway *New Zealand Mail* commented, "No man is a hero to his valet, and the wife of the professional humourist has no appetite for her husband's 'chestnuts.'" The Sydney fortnightly *Bulletin* came to her defense, citing the wives of Scott, Dickens, Byron, and Heine. "So Mrs. Clemens doesn't appreciate Mark Twain. Doubtless, all the better wife for that." Her public relations sense sharpened by the crisis, Livy acted decisively. "It was noticeable that Mrs. and Miss Clemens were present each evening, and were the most interested and attentive of auditors." Indeed, as they sat in their box at the Bijou Theatre, they "could not restrain their merriment" as he told the seed chestnut of them all, the jumping frog story.

Besides being responsive and in evidence, Livy and Clara were keenly observing the house in order to report back to the performer. Problems that bothered Twain were audibility; the value of changes in phrasing; the right proportion of pathos and humor; the response to timing, dramatic pauses, and shifts in pace; and the most effective length of selections, intermission, and entire show.

Wife and daughter were sweetly available when needed and able to take care of themselves at other times. Thus when Mark Twain sat for his photograph at Falk's Studio in Sydney, it was suggested that the rest of the family ought to be recorded. Mark obligingly sent word to the Australia Hotel for Livy and Clara to come "right up"

for their picture. This they did and were very appealing in their traveling dresses, Mrs. Clemens reserved in brown and Clara dark, slight, and pretty, "with hair done in Madonna fashion." Then Mark went rambling through parks and Town Hall with a reporter while his women dematerialized.

How they occupied themselves need be no mystery. Twain wrote practically no letters during his world tour, yet the family kept in touch with the Occident. Clara notes in *My Father Mark Twain*, "Mother and I were kept busy answering the mail." They went to "plenty of entertainments"—"horse-races, polo games, balls at Government House, and teas on the Admiral's ship"; saw a "gruesome" dramatization of Marcus Clarke's novel about a penal colony, *For the Term of His Natural Life*; and were guests on the "large sheep-ranch" of a convict's grandson. Clara was sometimes on her own, visiting "the prettily-decorated rooms" of a female artist or taking walks. She had "a particular capacity for running into queer people," as when she was approached by a lunatic eager to save her father from three assassins (Mark's version, set in New Zealand, does not involve Clara). She saw things in her own way, expanding or contracting time and distance as if she had a concertina in her hands. A delightful companion.

Twain depended on the quiet efficiency of his semi-invalid wife, who reduced the stress of frequent uprootings by attending to schedules, baggage smashers, and other nuisances. On leaving Adelaide, he was distracted by not finding wife, daughter, or luggage at the station. The ladies were out driving with Lieutenant-Governor Way, who had a sufficient time sense. When Livy appeared, everything fell into its right place; problems dissolved.

These and other marital benefits were in Twain's mind when he said in accepting a basket of flowers for Livy and Clara:

> I think this is a peculiarly gratifying occurrence, to join my family with me in the hospitalities which you extend to us. We have come a long distance, which at first it was my purpose to traverse alone. But I always have many purposes which fail, for reasons which those who are married among you will understand. I am technically "boss" of the family which I am carrying along—but I am grateful to know that it is only technically—that the real authority rests on the other side of the house. [Hear, hear.] It is placed there by a beneficent Providence, who foresaw before I was born—or, if he did not, he has found it out since—that I am not in any way

> qualified to travel alone. And so it has been my good fortune to be furnished with a wife who is always capable, both by brain and by heart, to make up all shortcomings which exist in me. She has brought me through for twenty-five years successfully, and while I do attribute that to an overruling Providence, my experience with Providence has not been of a nature to give me great confidence in his judgment, and I consider that my wife crept in while his attention was occupied elsewhere.

In his professional appearances, Mark Twain was more confident of his own abilities, less dependent on Providence. He usually emerged through a stage door or from behind a curtain or a draping of Stars and Stripes. Taking a few non-committal steps across the platform, he was arrested and pivoted toward the audience by a clamor of recognition "that rattled the windows in their sockets." Mark seemed puzzled, pained, then delighted by the reception. His audience, in turn, was puzzled to see the author of *Roughing It* in evening dress, black tie, and patent leather shoes, pained to find him frailer and older than it had imagined, but delighted to recognize the Twainian trademarks: uncut gray hair, deepset eyes, assertive nose, the expression of a leprechaun in a halo, and the American drawl, slack, nasal, and enchanting. Setting down his watch like a compass, the lecturer began. He might roam about a bit before coming to comparative rest on getting the feel of his audience. His feet apart, he thrust his right hand into a pocket, extracted it to point at what may have been a knothole in the boards or to prop up his chin, using the other hand to support his pendant elbow. He spoke at a conversational pitch, with his eyes almost closed, as if in interior search for the details of his stories. At each roar from the house, Mark waited patiently, perplexedly, as the writhing figures out there chopped up his veracious monologue. And all the time his expression was weary, relaxed, and melancholy.

Representative stories were the lost dime, the vagaries of the German language, the buckjumper, the boy and the corpse, Huck and Jim on the raft, and the frustrations of a courier taking a party from Geneva to "Wagner solemnities" at Bayreuth. They were for the most part recognizable pieces reworked from printed versions. At times "the Greatest Humourist of the Century" was topical and even extemporaneous, as when he apologized to a Sydney audience for keeping it waiting. The train from Scone had been behind time:

> I know I am late. But I couldn't help it, I have been travelling in a railway carriage, and the heat—whew! it was sweltering. Coming from the station in a cab I changed my clothes. I don't know where the other clothes are. They've gone in the cab. And I don't know where the cab is gone. It's probably melted. The only heat that I've experienced like this was what I once got in the Sandwich Islands. But there they don't trouble themselves much with superfluous clothing. The women wore—well, I don't remember what they wore. There wasn't enough of it. And the men—well, just on ordinary occasions they didn't wear anything. But on State occasions they did. They wore smiles, and they even smiled too much. If you in Australia have this kind of weather in the middle of December, what must you have in July?

The entertainer did work up one quasi-topical piece, "The Funniest Thing Ever Written of the Colonies, Entitled Mark Twain's Australian Poem." About once every three decades, Twain had a "particularly creepy feeling," a sure sign of poetic frenzy. The last poem he wrote was thirty years ago, and he had been wrestling with another seizure since mid-September of the present year. He would try to stick around until the third inspiration hit him—in 1925; then he was going to call it a day. Originality was the thing. "When I landed from that steamer at Sydney, why of course I looked round for a subject. There was the harbour, but I was too late for that. . . . Somebody had attended to it." In fact, he was told that "nine poets had died of that subject already" and that, if he insisted on making the tenth, the less violent residents would "pay my way out of the place."

Whereupon Mark chose the wonderful fauna of Australia and began diligently amassing names. He had the emu, the dingo, the bell bird, the laughing jackass, and a slew of others, including animals like the dugong, the kangaroo, and the lyre. "I have been told that the lyre is a bird, but I do not believe it," having "met plenty without feathers." "I've got the great auk and the she-oak (I have been promised a pair), and the ornithorhynchus. Oh! I think that's a daisy of a name. If I had a child, I'd christen it Ornithorhynchus. And I've got all the extinct birds, too—the moa, the boomerang, the dodo, and the larrikin."

The amateur naturalist's inevitable choice was the *Ornithorhynchus paradoxus* or *Platypus anatinus*, more familiarly known as the water mole, duckbill, or tambreet. This amphibious bundle of contradictions was Twain's idol—and his bane.

I can say now that the most difficult thing in the world to do is to write poetry when you don't know how. You see it is the rhymes that make the trouble, for if you get the sense right, why then there is no word that will rhyme with it. If your rhymes rhyme, then there is no sense in it.

Land of the ornithorhynchus,
Land of the kangaroo,
Old ties of heredity link us . . .

And there you are. You see, I am right against a dead wall. You can see there is nothing in the world that will rhyme with ornithorhynchus. Kangaroo? Nothing rhymes with kangaroo. Of course, you can slyly let it off without rhyme, but it would fail. I gave that up. I'll let it out by contract. I thought I would offer a prize for it—chromos, or something like that. I started another way.

Land of the fur-tailed rabbit,
Land of the boomerang.

There is the same thing. You can't find a rhyme for rabbit and another rhyme for boomerang. Boomerang don't rhyme with anything but boomerang. I saw the difficulty. You must start on a simple basis.

Come forth from thy oozy couch,
Oh ornithorhynchus dear,
And greet with a cordial cheer
The stranger that longs to hear
From thy own, own lips the "tail" of thy origin all unknown,
Thy misplaced bone where flesh should be, and flesh where should be bone.

Mark fidgeted with words, changing "cheer" to "claw," "longs" to "yearns," and "fur-tailed" to "fruitful." Then, discovering that there was no great Australian epic, he pledged himself "to supply this want" by further elaboration. Although the opus would take years to complete, his public was assured, "*Nulla dies sine linea.*" Thus for weeks, in sundry cities, he teased audiences with doled out verses and laments over parturition pains. At last Mark labored and brought forth another stanza:

And fishy fin where should be paw,
And beaver trowel tail
And snout, oh beast equipped wi' teeth
Where claws ought to prevail.

You see, I have got that animal wrong. He has got a beaver trowelled tail, but it is on the other end of him. I cannot help that. The animal is not made right, and he must be made to fit. The creature has no teeth, but I

> cannot help that. I have got to rhyme, and the animal has got to have teeth, if it is only a false set. That animal must do his share in this poem. . . . I cannot arrange the poetry and the animal too.

Although Twain had no scruples about charging people for reading him, he did have twinges of conscience about making them pay to hear him talk. He was more comfortable at non-profit affairs in his honor. His hosts entertained him, and he returned the courtesy. At his ease in a room whose acoustical range he could soon master, he familiarized himself with a fairly homogeneous group, made mental notes, and waited for some remark of the chairman's which he could use as a "text." Meanwhile, the liquid tide of geniality had risen considerably before the speakers' words began to flow.

Twain's method of accepting a toast or an introduction—falling into reminiscence, playing on sentiment, and proposing a health—may be observed at the Yorick Club supper and the Australian Institute of Journalists smoke night of September 28 and October 26, Melbourne frolics from which reporters were fortunately not excluded. At the journalists' gathering after Twain "was received with the utmost cordiality, all rising and cheering him vociferously," Mr. J. L. Dow rose to say that the guest of the evening must shoulder the grave responsibility of having driven him to his present line of life. In his early days, Dow tended sheep and crops for eighty or ninety pounds a year until he read the American's "How I Edited an Agricultural Paper." This turned him into an agricultural reporter, and since then "anything that was worth anything in agriculture in this colony was due to his efforts." The meeting drank the health of "a brother journalist" who had said more than once that journalism was work and writing books only play. Musical honors, cheers, and prolonged applause emphasized the toast.

Mark Twain conceded that his introducer was highly en*dow*ed. "I am glad to perceive at last after waiting these many many weary years, which I supposed had been wasted, that in one instance at least my labour has not been in vain. I recognise that in lifting Mr. Dow out of the sheep run, I have conferred a benefit upon the human race—and also upon the sheep."

To the delight of eighty-five members of the Yorick Club, Twain meandered from topic to topic until he came to the Mississippi, revisited after youth had lapsed.

If I had created the human race—[laughter, and a voice, "You did some of them"]—oh! I could have done it. I was asked nothing about it, and I didn't suggest anything. But I thought that if I had created the human race, and had discovered they were a kind of failure—and had drowned them out—well, I would recognize that was a good thing. And then, fortified by experience, I would start the thing on a different plan. I would have no more of that 969 years' business. I wouldn't let people grow that old. I would cut them off at thirty. Because a man's youth is the thing he loves to think about, and it is the thing that he regrets. It is the one part of his life that he most thoroughly enjoys. . . . Oh, dear me! I never would have created age. Age has its own value—but that is to other people, not to those who have it.

Now Mark would be scared to death every time it came a fog on the river, but when he was young and careless,

fogs and dark nights had a charm for me. I didn't own any stock in that steamboat. And that is one of the very advantages of youth. You don't own any stock in anything. You have a good time, and all the grief and trouble is with the other fellows. Youth is a lovely thing, and certainly never was there a diviner time to me in this world. All the rest of my life is one thing—but my life as a pilot on the Mississippi River when I was young—Oh! that was a darling existence. There has been nothing comparable to it in my life since.

So, too, he expressed gratitude to the journalists for

a darling evening of my life. I am now on the verge of sixty years; in the month of November, so close at hand, I shall be sixty years of age. I have detested old age from my infancy, and anything that removes from me even for a few moments the consciousness that I am old is gratifying to me. For the two or three hours I have been here this night—since nine o'clock struck and I entered this room—I have gone back thirty years, and have rejuvenated. . . . I have been utterly happy tonight.

Before he left, however, Mark spoke once more.

May I have the privilege of proposing a toast. I desire to propose the health of the chairman. I do not know the particulars of the chairman's history at all, but on an occasion of this kind it would not be gracious, it would not be pleasant, it would not be in good taste to expose that. Let us overlook the past. Let us consider that whatever he has been before this evening that has all gone by, and from this time out he is a reformed man. So now let us drink his health—not as the health of the man we had known heretofore, but as the man who is going to rise infinitely superior to anything he has been before and whose character will now shine from this time out with a refulgent light. I don't know what "refulgent light"

> is, but it is a good expression, and good words make eloquence, whether they mean anything or not. Let us drink with enthusiasm to this "reformed case."

From the start, Mark Twain was cautious about discussing Australia in the presence of Australians. "What are my ideas and impressions on coming to Australia? I don't know. I'm ready to adopt any that seem handy. I don't believe in going outside accepted views. If there are any little things, for instance, that you would like to work off on me, fire away." Only when he had a greenhorn from the Ballarat *Star* at his mercy did he permit himself the release of irony. Then he said that he had "an almost insatiable craving to remain and feast his eyes upon its picturesque spots, which abound in every colony, and to associate with men and women who love their country and can stand by a stranger. Mr. Clemens is a very versatile man, and has a nice style of speech, but he does not care to say too much of any place until he leaves it." Once safely on the Indian Ocean, Twain confided to his *Notebook*: "The native Australian is as vain of his unpretty country as if it were the final masterpiece of God. . . . He . . . can't bear to have critical things said about her." The truth was that the country had no history, its Sundays were dour, its trains ran on "the jackass system," and its landscape was monotonous.

Any exceptions were happily noted. The twelve-mile scenic hill road from Aldgate to Adelaide excited the American. Everything he saw from a horse-drawn carriage was exotic except the grass.

> I had seen grass before. The trees, shrubs, plants and flowers were all new, and they would have remained so had I not been accompanied by my fellow countryman, Mr. Murphy [the consul] who, though knowing nothing whatever about them, described every one accurately. That was a friendly office to perform. When one was a stranger in a strange land the thing he wanted, hungered for, and longed for, was information about the country, and he did not care whether it was correct or not. All he wanted was information.

Of course, Mark had read "barrow loads of books on Australia" and had waded in statistics on "extent of land, number of sheep and cattle, and population," but some facts he was not briefed on. The place had a "darling," a "supreme climate . . ."

> where in midwinter you have summer, and where you have neither mosquitoes nor snow . . . and where apparently it is always holiday—and

> where, when you have no holiday and nothing else to do, it is always a horse-race. . . . You place your holidays, not in accordance with the day, but to suit your own comfort and convenience. I passed through Australia when you were celebrating the Prince of Wales' birthday upon the 8th, upon the 10th, or upon the 11th—you skipped the 9th altogether. I suppose there was a horse-race.

It was easy for Twain to sympathize with Australian life and institutions. For one thing, Australians had tall buildings and rapid hydraulic elevators, unlike Europeans, who "still stick to the old slow going lift that carries two people and a half, and you arrive at old age on your trip to the sixth floor." He found in Australians a compatibility between "the sentiment that takes kindly to the swift lift and the electric wire, and the sentiment that preserves the old plough that turned your first sod, or the trees where your explorers camped when they opened up your country." They were pioneers still, more like Americans than Englishmen—blunt, unselfconscious, energetic, appreciative, and hospitable, in short, a "cordial nation."

That cordiality was almost overwhelming in the welcome Australians gave Mark Twain. Every touring lion had an advantage which Carlyle Smythe, the son of Twain's manager, explained in this way: Australia was "a happy hunting ground for public speakers" because of an insatiable "taste for seeing and hearing celebrities." But in Twain's case there was more than curiosity and hunger for culture, there was affection for the man.

Under the boisterousness of audiences there was always a broad current of human feeling. One At Home was heavily attended by Church of England, Roman Catholic, Presbyterian, Baptist, and Wesleyan clergymen, who banged their walking sticks and cackled like schoolboys. Ladies were less abandoned, but they clapped their hands, waved their handkerchiefs, and laughed wholeheartedly. Street rowdies and the "gods" in the gallery took Twain to their hearts. In Sydney streets the American was puzzled by the grinning query, "Say—Mark—is he dead?" And in Melbourne shouts came from the gallery, "Come on, Huck!" and "Is he dead, Mark?" (When Twain asked what it was all about, he was reminded of the guying of the guide in *The Innocents Abroad,* "Christopher Colombo—pleasant name—is—is he dead?")

The elder Smythe might pontificate in an advertisement, "Everybody Should Hear Mark Twain. . . . His genial influence is a perpetual benediction. . . . On the platform he is a splendid inspiration. . . . Positively No Free-list," but the newspaper writer signing himself "Ab-Original" was closer to the truth:

> And thou art here—*here* in our little city,
> Thou universal giant among men!
> We'll see thee, though our creditors may pity
> The wanton waste, and curse thy magic pen.
> We love thee so. . . .

Twain summed it up less emotionally in his reply to Sir Richard Baker's toast to "The Visitors" during the ceremonies of South Australia's Commemoration Day:

> It seemed to me that in my responding for the visitors there is a sort of incongruity about it—an infelicity. It seemed impossible for me to stand here in this formal attitude as if a visitor, when I have been in these colonies three and a half months, and when from the beginning half of the people seemed to regard me as a member of their family.

Alaska Thawing

By MARGARET BURRELL

The ravens chortle—the sun grows warm;
The snow clumps melt off the spruce's arm.
The leads in the ice of the inland stream
Steam black with the coming of summer's dream.

The hills are rust and purple with swell
Of aspen and birch buds; with damp snow smell
The pure white land comes speckled to view
And the doming sky regains dark blue.

MARGARET BURRELL has lived and travelled in many parts of the United States, first as the child of peripatetic parents, then as a librarian. She is presently base librarian for the Air Force's most northern U.S. base in Alaska but hopes eventually to transfer to Europe or the Orient.

Alaskan Autumn

By MARGARET BURRELL

Across the same familiar face
Of land beyond the small-paned windows,
Outside the fence of town a change has come.

As snow upon the grass chased green to bronze,
the hills come gold—
And golden trees, the birch in glory,
The firs turned golden, too,
All match the glaring highway signs,
The yellow center-line,
The garish road equipment clanking—
All become at once the same
And part of a great golden cry
From this the "golden heart."

High yellow on the hills,
A great bronze shield flaunts beneath the sky.
Alaska lies a tawny princess,
As her tundra mosses and rewinding streams
Slowly harden into sleep.
The touch of white upon her garments
Only makes the sharp-drawn breath more dear,
Knowing the long rigidity to come.

Thus bright fish will leap to the last of lures
As over them the crystal windows start to close
And a thread of grey creeps up the burning sky
From weather breeder mountains
Where glaciers hang—And in a moment
Of storm the world is sheared to monotone.

So soon the gold is gone.
Stark feathers of the trees outline
Clear snowy margins to the lakes
And another world awakes.

Muscles gather under well-furred hides
To meet the Ice Age environ's bitter tides.

Woman in a Red Nightrobe

(Sung on Teleprinter)

By MAXIM GHILAN

THEY WRITE FROM SEATTLE A WOMAN
HAS BEEN FOUND DEAD IN A RED NIGHTROBE
A RED RED ROROBE
A RED NIGHTROBE (MORE)
A WOMAN YOUNG HER HAIR IN ORDER
HER BODY SLEEPING UNDISTURBED
A BULLET HOLE BLUE BURNED ON HER TEMPLE
HER RIGHT YOUNG TEMPLE
QUOTE THE BLOOD WAS RED AROUND HER HEAD LIKE
THE RIGHT REDNIGHTROBE UNQUOTE
THE RED RED NIGHTROBE UNQUOTE XXXXX
THE RED RED RED NIGHTQUOTE XXXXX
THUS NEWS FROM SEATTLE THEN STOCK QUOTATIONS
AND THEN HAMMERSHIELD MORE AND MORE AND MORE
POLITICAL NEWS ECONOMIC REPORTS AUTOMATIC
RELEASES OF A NIGHT AGAIN PASSED BLANK
ALONE THE GLORIOUS WORK OF RETRANSMISSION

AND SHE OF THE RED NIGHTROBE
LAYING THERE STILL HER HEAD COATED IN RED RED
BLOOD LIKE THE RED RED OF THE RED NIGHTROBE
FLASH NEWS FROM NAGASAKI TELL OF FORTY FISHERS
CAUGHT BY THE ATOM STORM THE AFGHAN CHIEFLINGS HAVE
PROTESTED AGAIN AGAINST AFGHAN TREACHERY IT SEEMS
BUT QUOTE WHERE IS SHE OF THE RED BURNING NIGHTROBE
INTERROGATION UNQUOTE
QUOTE LYING IN THE MORGUE MORGUE MORGUE
LIE LYING IN THE MORGUE UN QUOTE

MAXIM GHILAN is co-editor of the Hebrew literary review *Ach'shav* and the author of three volumes of verse published in Israel, where he lives.

Kierkegaard, Existentialism, and the Contemporary Scene

By PAUL W. KURTZ

■ "Existentialism" is a name that enjoys widespread popularity today. It is still identified in the popular mind with left-bank Paris intellectual life in the Bohemian cafes such as *Le Flore* and *Les Deux Magots*, where Sartre, Camus, and Simone de Beauvoir argued, wined, and wrote. It has had an impact on the literary world and has affected psychoanalytic and political thought, though basically it is a philosophical and theological doctrine. Some have heralded it as *the* true philosophy for our time, presenting the proper image of man; others have deplored it as a philosophy of despair, cynicism, and irrationalism.

The writings of the Existentialists divide roughly into two classes: on the one side there is the religiously oriented form of theistic Existentialism, of which the nineteenth-century Danish writer, Soren Kierkegaard is the first and foremost influence (and which includes the theologians Tillich, Berdyaev, Marcel, and Buber). But on the other side stand the atheistic or naturalistic Existentialists (especially Heidegger and Sartre) who, although influenced by Kierkegaard, nonetheless go back to Nietszche's warning that "God is dead!" and his admonition to men to face up to the fact that they are responsible for what they are and that they must forge their own destinies by free choice. The question that we

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shall pose in this paper is whether Kierkegaard's brand of Existentialism provides an appropriate philosophical basis for the present age.

It is paradoxical that Soren Kierkegaard, a solitary individual largely unknown to his century, should be rediscovered in ours and provide the inspiration for present-day Existentialism. Why was Kierkegaard virtually forgotten until the twentieth century? Some have suggested that had Kierkegaard published in German or another influential European language besides Danish, his thought might have had an earlier impact upon Europe. But his obscurity perhaps was was also due to the fact that he stood outside of and against the intellectual and social life of the Europe of the first half of the nineteenth century, and he had rebelled against everything that his countrymen held dear. Kierkegaard's main point of view as an author was *how to become a Christian,* how an individual might develop *inwardness of faith;* and he thought that Speculative Reason had lost the true meaning of Christianity. But he also stood against Christendom as it existed in the Europe of his age, and he attacked the established Danish Church for sham and hypocrisy. Kierkegaard was a bitter foe of conformist institutionalized religion and mass society for obliterating the individual. And so he lived a lonely and solitary life. He had to bear throughout most of his adult life the cruel ridicule of his fellow Danes; his name became associated with vain philosophical pretension. Unappreciated in his own day, today, however, he has become the fountainhead for the departure into Existentialist philosophy. Is it because the present age is a crisis age that the present climate of opinion is more receptive to the Kierkegaardian mood?

The central concept of Kierkegaard's whole philosophy is the individual and his choice. In *Either/Or,*[1] Kierkegaard poses a dilemma. There are two stages of life: (1) The first type is the *aesthetic.* The main trait of this kind of life is the search for pleasure and delight, such as that pursued by the epicurean and voluptuary. Don Juan is the ideal prototype. The aesthetic person flits from experience to experience, lives for the present moment of enjoyment, and revels in its subjective immediacy and sensuousness. But the perspective of this style of life is limited, the outlook narrow. Being

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[1] *Either/Or,* translated by David F. Swenson and Lillian M. Swenson (Princeton, N.J.: University of Princeton Press), 1944.

interested in objects for possession and enjoyment, he is dominated by external circumstances. Instead of developing serious inner qualities, he is at the beck and call of the objects that he seeks. As a rule, the hedonist soon finds that external goods are fleeting and ephemeral. The most devastating enemy of the aesthetic life is boredom and ennui, and though one may appear gay to others, one is really masking a deep melancholy. For one can never be satisfied with his perennial quest after elusive objects. (As Plato observed, in the *Philebus*, the life of pleasure is like a leaking pitcher, it can never be filled.) Indeed, the aesthetic individual frequently becomes sceptical about pleasures; and he may even become a cynic and abandon the search for thrill altogether. (2) But there is a second type of life, the *ethical*. This represents a dynamic effort and unending quest. The ethical individual holds external objects and goals transitory and illusory, and he prefers to concentrate on self-development. The morally dedicated person seeks happiness in the moral virtues; and he settles down and performs his obligations and duties in society: in marriage, business, and a career. This man is motivated by practical rather than theoretical reason. He is a realist, not a romantic. He strives to be kind, considerate, charitable. But he is often simply bourgeois, and his life is ultimately incomplete, for there is a kind of teleological suspension.

In *Either/Or*, Kierkegaard dramatizes the aesthetic and ethical stages of life, but he selects neither, leaving it for the reader to make his own choice. Yet for Kierkegaard there is still a third kind of life, a higher stage. Indeed, Kierkegaard himself rejected the first and second stages and devoted himself to the *religious life*. All of his later books, his aesthetic productions, philosophical works, and "edifying" religious sermons work toward this ideal.

For Kierkegaard, both the aesthetic and ethical lives are full of gnawing despair and dread. They are limited in their perspectives and empty of ultimate meaning. Indeed, he wrote:

> . . . there lives not one single man who after all is not to some extent in despair, in whose inmost parts there does not dwell a disquietude, a perturbation, a discord, an anxious dread of an unknown something, or of a something he does not even dare to make acquaintance with . . ."[2]

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[2] Kierkegaard, *The Sickness Unto Death*, translated with an Introduction by Walter Lowrie (Princeton; Princeton University Press), 1941, p. 32.

There is a "sickness of spirit," and though we do not always face it, it grows in the remotest depths of our inner souls. For our life is one of finitude, and as such involves hopelessness. There is a suffering and pain that eats at our roots. As Heidegger later emphasized, each man faces non-being and his own death; and though he may put it out of his mind and fly from it, it must meet each of us directly one day. We think that death happens to other persons, or that it applies only to the old; yet we are each focused on the inevitable.

This brings us directly to the crux of Kierkegaard's Existentialism; that is, the *individual's existence,* and his subjective consciousness. Kierkegaard's religion is sustained by the pulse of the individual—by it alone is it quickened or does it languish. The essence of Christianity is the individual and the dilemmas he faces. And human choice always is of a concrete human personality. Thus religion, Kierkegaard was convinced, if it is to have any vitality, must be related to the individual, and it is tested by what it does for him.

Now there are two main points that I wish to examine here, and they lie close to Kierkegaard's Existentialism. First, I wish to deal with Kierkegaard's attempt to defend Christianity by his famous doctrine that "subjectivity is truth," his attack on Speculative Reason and the divorce of philosophy from life, and his defense of passion. And second, I wish to discuss his emphasis on the category of the individual, the depths of human psychology, and his discovery of human freedom. And this is precisely where "Existentialism" derives its name: for "Existentialism" refers to the concrete existing individual who is the primary starting point of all knowledge and being.

Let me deal with Kierkegaard's theory of truth first. The problem for Kierkegaard, as I have already indicated, concerns the third stage of life, the religious life. But *why* ought one to choose this way of life, and *why* in particular ought one to become a Christian? Kierkegaard observed that most of his fellow Danes were nominal Christians, having been baptized and taking part in the external paraphernalia of religious life. Yet none of them had ever really taken their Christianity seriously enough to live it; they had not really appropriated it into their inner lives.

Philosophers have always asked for the justification of religious

doctrine, and theistic and Christian theologians, especially since the time of St. Thomas Aquinas in the thirteenth century, have tried to give a rational proof for belief in the existence of God. But these proofs had come under severe critical attacks by modern philosophers. Kant had shown the impossibility of proving by logical argument the existence of God: one could "demonstrate" both the existence and non-existence of a necessary being by the use of pure reason; but all such deductions failed, for they were devoid of perceptual observation. And arguments for the divinity of Jesus, as the Son of God, which were based on alleged historical evidence of miraculous occurrences, were also seriously questioned by the empirical philosophers in the Age of the Enlightenment. Christianity was held to be mere superstition, too mythological a tale for rational persons or sceptics to swallow. David Hume had said with tongue-in-cheek that Christianity *indeed* was based on a miracle, but the only miracle was that people were willing to believe its incredible truth by subverting all evidence and reason of the understanding!

But it was Hegel who especially troubled Kierkegaard. For Hegel was the leading metaphysical philosopher of the day and he had an enormous reputation and influence in the universities. Hegel replaced biblical Christianity with rational religion. For Hegel, the Absolute or Divine Reason was universal and was becoming aware of itself through history. Christ was only one incident in the march of consciousness through time. Religion expressed itself in general institutions, but these, too, were only part of the deeper development of Historical Reason.

Now Kierkegaard reacted strongly against the reduction of religion to reason, whether for or against religion. In his major philosophical work, *Concluding Unscientific Postscript*,[3] he asserts that *religious faith or belief* is not the same as reason and that it need not be given a rational proof. Faith is a persuasion resulting from conviction, which is not capable of deductive demonstration. He protested against the view that the only justification of religion that is possible is the sort that the speculative philosopher can give. It is fantastic, he thought, that the religious man must await

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[3] *Concluding Unscientific Postscript*, translated by David F. Swenson and Walter Lowrie (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press), 1941.

the philosopher's decision before he can believe. Abstract concepts, he claimed, have very little to do with concrete experience. Hegel's system is like a ballet of bloodless categories. It substitutes empty and universal concepts for real life. Life is an intense and personal thing, so is religious belief. Reason is not the whole of life, nor can it ever replace it. In terms of analytic philosophy, religious language is not solely cognitive or descriptive but has other functions. Passion digs deep into our bowels, and religious faith has its roots in our passionate nature, our inwardness. The speculative philosopher talks about objective reason. He wishes to give a systematic account of Reality. But Kierkegaard maintains that as a result he usually loses the subject, the person, the concrete and existing individual. The existential process is not static and independent, but it is temporal and involves movement. Rational philosophy is divorced from life, and rational religion from religious experience. Philosophers all too often want to discourse on what Christianity is, its objective side, its cognitive aspect—yet without knowing what it means to be a Christian. Socrates, at least, whom Kierkegaard admired above all other philosophers and considered to be an "Existential" philosopher (as a matter of fact, many contemporary philosophers from different schools claim Socrates as their own), never lost sight of the significance of philosophy to life; but where philosophers follow abstract reason they betray the legacy of Socrates and are untrue to life. To know what it means to be a Christian, *one must live the faith;* and if any be needed, this is its sole vindication.

Here Kierkegaard is claiming that *subjectivity is truth.* In other words, knowledge is private, inner, intuitive, subjective. It is only the truth that *edifies* that truth for me. It is something that I only learn about by living, doing, and being a person, and not by discursive or dialectical analysis. This is a central theme of contemporary Existentialism, its key starting point. The individual begins with his own existence first, not *"cogito"* nor *"ergo,"* but *"sum,"* not the "I think," or "therefore," but the *"I am," "je suis," "Ich bin."* Within this and in relation to this he builds his world, the world of the conscious self *first,* not the world of external objects out there and unrelated to me. The only reality for an existing individual is his own ethical reality. The real act for him is not the eternal act but the *internal decision.*

But what of Christianity? Is it true? Does God exist? Was there a Christ? Christianity appears ludicrous and paradoxical. It rests on contradictions between the eternal truth of an eternal happiness and a subjective self, and between an eternal divine truth and a God who takes on flesh, becoming man in history. These paradoxes for Kierkegaard are irreconcilable. There are no logical or scientific proofs available for Christianity. Yet with Tertullian, the early Father of the Church, and Hamann, his near contemporary, he says: I believe, though it is absurd. Why? Because of the meaning of faith in my life. Within my deepest psychological self there is the premonition of dread, a vague and unidentifiable anxiety about life and the human condition. In such a psychological state I am unsatisfied, my self is inauthentic, I am only partly existing. There is a "fear and trembling," a "sickness of the spirit unto death" that will devour me—unless, that is, Christ truly is the mediator and Son of God, the light, the way, the truth for all men, but especially for me. I experience guilt, I have inwardness of sin, and here I am the furthest distance from the truth. But my finitude can be transcended and I can be made whole only by my faith which provides a bridge to God: an inwardness of conviction that is not rational at core, but passionate and captures my whole existing being. To commit oneself to Christ is to make a choice, it is to make a leap of affirmation beyond reason. "How may I participate in the happiness promised by Christianity?"—*that* is the question which my passionate nature demands. When one falls in love with another person it is the subjective feeling that is central, and argument and reason are peripheral in justifying the passion; similarly when one loves God. To express love for God in the face of objective uncertainty about the validity of Christian doctrine is the highest act that a man can perform. And it is significantly true for ***me*** only because it is so keenly felt and vitally appropriated into my being. Grasped in the anguish of pain of sin, facing the risk of objective insecurity, faith is a subjective truth and commitment. And it is justified because it transforms and emancipates and makes me whole. Objectivity can destroy Christianity, only subjectivity can sustain it.

Kierkegaard's equation of subjectivity with truth is essential to contemporary Existentialism. Although Kierkegaard uses this epistemological principle to defend Christianity, others, including athe-

istic Existentialists, also adopt it as their starting point. This is how one may read the use of the phenomenological method which Sartre and Heidegger inherited with modification from Husserl. They begin with the given in the field of subjective awareness and seek to analyze its structure. (Husserl thought his method objectively scientific. And Heidegger is not merely concerned with private subjectivity, but with the ontological structure of existence. But Heidegger in *Sein und Zeit* concentrates upon the analysis of *Dasein*, or human being: dread, grief, suffering, non-being, death—and here the impact of Kierkegaard is unmistakable. He denied that he was an "Existentialist" in Kierkegaard's sense, for it is not the subjective self alone that he was concerned with, but only the structure of subjectivity in so far as it reflected the metaphysical nature and structure of Being. Heidegger does, however, agree that subjectivity is truth, as his essay on "Hölderlin and the Essence of Poetry" indicates,[4] though he is apparently more willing to use dialectical reason than Kierkegaard.)

Now what is distinctive in the repeated statements of Kierkegaard and other Existentialists that "subjectivity is truth" is the contrast of this with the main line of development within Western philosophy and science. For the Western mind, as distinct from the Asian and the Oriental, let us say, has been conceptual, abstract, deductive. Perhaps the most characteristic aspect of Western Civilization is the development of logic (from Aristotelian to symbolic logic) and scientific method (of which our technological civilization is the most immediate result). In the East, the immediate and intuitive are pervasive. One thing that is apparent when one studies the philosophies of both Europe and Asia is that a contrast, though difficult, *can* be found. In the West, we have emphasized deductive logic and science, but in the East, feeling, passion, immediacy, and inwardness. Now it is notable that Kierkegaard and the Existentialists' doctrine that "subjectivity is truth" is similar to the reliance on affective inwardness in the Orient. Although there have been other subjectivists historically in the West (and indeed conceptualists in the East), the special emphasis of Kierkegaard in the West *is* unique: he is not

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[4] Reprinted in Heidegger, Martin, *Existence and Being* (Chicago, Ill.: Henry Regnery Co.), 1949.

primarily a romantic, and he is not a mystic in the ordinary sense. Yet he emphasizes inwardness. It is one thing to think, but it is another to exist in what has been thought, and Kierkegaard is emphasizing this latter.

Although I have refrained from any criticism of Kierkegaard's thesis thus far, I must express serious misgivings about the epistemological doctrine that "subjectivity is truth." I fear that there is great danger that *any* belief may be justified in the same way. If all standards of evidence and consistency are abandoned, as I fear Kierkegaard does, then the door is left open to an irrationalism of the most dangerous sort. If Alice in Wonderland encounters a Humpty Dumpty who can make "up" appear "down" and "down" "up," then the world of fact becomes topsy-turvy and chaos reigns. Zen Buddhism, like Kierkegaardianism, introduces paradox. D. T. Suzuki tells us that a master would frequently dramatize the truth by remaining silent, for the truth is inexpressible, or perhaps reply to a question of a disciple by a blow on the head!

But this leaves all but the initiated exasperated. *When* is a proposition false? Is it consistent? May it be verified? Canons of objectivity have been developed by slow, hard, and sober work. And we may argue that they are the most effective rules that we have for warranting belief. The methods of logic and science are open and public, one may repeat the steps required to arrive at warranted assertions. The hypotheses derived are tentative, piecemeal, problematic. They are tested by their internal consistency and their relation to factual observation and verification. Yet to claim that "subjectivity is truth" is to throw caution to the winds, and this can only perplex the careful analytically-minded person—for it may lead to irresponsibility in belief. Using Kierkegaard's method, Mohammedanism, Buddhism, Nazism, or any other doctrine may be made true if inwardly appropriated by some individual. I do not see where Kierkegaard's standard of truth places Christianity in a special position or saves its doctrinal truth from the attacks of critical philosophy. It is paradoxical that while Asia is discarding its intuitive religious tradition and adopting Western philosophical attitudes in science, logic, technology, and political thought for a great leap forward, Western thinkers who advocate Existentialism are lapsing into a kind of Asian neo-intuitionism.

Now one must surely not substitute the abstract for the concrete, and this is a valid point of Kierkegaard. Other philosophers have made a similar point, especially empiricists and pragmatists. But Hegel and German idealism are not the only alternatives in philosophy to Kierkegaard. Moreover, in science the controlled use of objective methods has been employed with great success. Surely concrete facts are not ignored here, but are essential in explanation. Since Kierkegaard's time, the psychological and social sciences have made immense strides in an effort to explain subjectively human processes. Rather than gloss in subjectivity, contemporary science seeks to understand it. If there are limitations to reason, the alternative is not to lapse into subjectivity. Kierkegaard's own criticisms of Hegel proceeded from a highly involved and subtle use of dialectical reason. Indeed, he recognizes this when he says in his work *The Point of View for my Work as an Author* ". . . I am reflection from first to last."[5] Thus pure subjectivity itself is not possible as an approach, for it would mean the end of all linguistic and symbolic communication. Many in the West would claim that the only alternative to confusion is the objective method. The problem of our time, perhaps, is not that reason, logic, and science have failed us, but that they have not been extended far enough into the area of human values.

There is an important aspect to Kierkegaard's work that should not be minimized, however. And this I take it is a second major point that present-day Existentialism emphasizes—the individual as a fundamental category of existence.

Kierkegaard was a careful observer of human experience, a kind of introspective psychologist who probed into the depths of our being. To classical Greek philosophy, man was a rational animal, a featherless biped who could deliberate before choosing. And for the liberal or the enlightened view, man (even if a self-interested hedonist) could guide his destiny rationally. Thus the dominant Western philosophical view was rather optimistic concerning human potentialities: all men seek the good life, and happiness was possible within a just society. But this to Kierkegaard was not true to human experience as it is actually lived. For there is suffering and anguish,

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[5] Translated by W. Lowrie (New York: Oxford University Press), 1939, p. 81.

fear and torment, boredom and death. Some have labelled Kierkegaard a "dismal Dane" because he dwelt on the morbid. But Kierkegaard maintained that this is a side of life that we all know about deep down and that we must never forget. Thus he helped to expand the domain of awareness of ourselves. "Know thyself," he said, following Socates and emphasizing self-knowledge and self-realization. And later Dostoyevski, in describing the underground of man's soul, also found terrifying aspects. Freud went deeper into the roots of the unconscious, especially as expressed in neurotic personality, to discover infantile eroticism, the domain of the sexual libido, and other hidden motivations. And contemporary Existentialists, especially Heidegger and Sartre, go still further into Existential psychoanalysis of depths of the psyche. And what do they find: man, the individual, a single, solitary being, is all alone in his private consciousness. Man is the only being who is aware that he is going to die and who can comprehend his historicity and finitude. Man stares into the abyss of nothingness: *le néant*. And in this light his loneliness takes on full meaning. His feelings of dread and anxiety express a generalized fear, not toward this, that, or any other object, but about the human condition itself. Philosophy and science, which postulate a universal human nature or which construct systems of general law to explain the human being, frequently end up by leaving out altogether the existing individual and his concrete experiencing. This is what Kierkegaard maintained and this is what the Existentialists today insist upon: clarity about the roots of our inner being. Although the individual seems to be vanquished by pessimism in much Existentialist literature, it must be remembered that Kierkegaard's despair had an ultimate optimism; for in the end the individual might be saved from his debasement by the redeeming grace of religious experience. The answer to my death will help me to transform my life and to live existentially. Man stands between being and nothingness, the finite and infinite, the temporal and eternal. And faith is the leap over to the positive state of existing.

Thus there is a moral aspect to the emphasis on the individual. The individual stands alone and against the crowd. Kierkegaard (like Marx) thought that modern industrial society had endangered the dignity of human personality. Men are oppressed, thwarted, and reduced by social pressures. Men are estranged and alienated from

their true selves. They have forfeited their lives to the "they" of social consensus. Each self at root is free. One's freedom has its source in self-consciousness and is radical and ultimate. Yet the demands of social pressure and external authority compel many to forfeit their individual freedom and self-determination. Many forget what it means to be individuals. Their existence becomes "inauthentic." Individuals need to reawaken the possibilities for self-control. What is needed are uncommon men who will take the first steps toward a renaissance of personal integrity. Marx, a student of Hegelian thought, like Kierkegaard, also reacted against Hegel's Speculative Reason, though he accepted Hegel's collective interpretation of the individual; for Marx the solution to individual alienation was rationally to reconstruct a society in which the means of the production will be raised to satisfy the real needs of the community. Both Kierkegaard and Marx shared fears that modern industrial society was destroying the individual. But their remedies were far apart: for if Marx turned outward to remake the material or economic conditions of life, Kierkegaard turned inward to the heart: each individual must awaken the possibilities of self-determination that slumber within and thus remake himself.

For recent Existentialism, the whole point of Kierkegaard's emphasis on the individual is that the individual has the choice to be himself. "Man," according to Sartre, "is condemned at every moment to make man." Man has no determinate essence, unlike the stone or the dog. As a consciously existing being, he is free to decide his own future and to create his own destiny. For Kierkegaard the stakes are great, but the option for the individual, of course, is the kind of life offered by Christianity, as it is for other religious Existentialists. This is the answer to the problem of human existence. But while Sartre accepts the human problem roughly as defined by Kierkegaard, he rejects Kierkegaard's solution; for the religious ideal is dead and offers no real promise to man. Rather man (individually and socially) must build a secular and naturalistic world, and is responsible solely for himself. There are no values independent of man. Yet both Kierkegaard's and Sartre's alternatives are connected to individual existence and human freedom. For Existentialism, the highest opportunity for an individual is to become whatever he wants, to recognize that he is his own master. Only in so far as he can recog-

nize his own potentialities and fulfill the projects he sets for himself can he begin to achieve the highest level of his authentic being. Only then can he become fully existential. We must, says Heidegger, heed "the call of Being," in this sense *Dasein* or our individual being. And since every choice we make emanates from our existential selves, it is fraught with danger, for it verges on the brink of disaster: to make or destroy ourselves. If every act of choice is an expression of radical freedom, then every act skirts the fine line between basic success or achievement on the one side, and failure or destruction on the other.

Now a good deal of this account of human freedom is no doubt true. Many will say that it is time that men face the fact that our values are not given to us *a priori,* but that they are relative to each person and that each is responsible for his ultimate existence. Many will approve on moral grounds of the protection of individuality against the inroads of conformity and collectivization. But the old question of freedom versus determinism rears its head again. Although human beings make decisions which affect their subsequent behavior, still it is difficult to deny that our decisions and actions are determined to some extent; at least, there appear to be causal conditions present in every situation of choice. Undoubtedly, man is an existing individual, but one may also argue that every thing that exists, exists in some sense as a particular existent. And individuals may be classified, interpreted, and explained by means of the concepts and hypotheses of the sciences. Man has a determinate nature in the sense that the species may be distinguished from other things by means of general properties. We must surely guard against the fallacy of glibly attributing a "universal" human nature to man, and there is always the danger of reading into it our own social or psychological traits; yet the social and bio-psychological sciences presuppose that there is some order in human conduct as the basis of scientific prediction and explanation. Although we are purposeful beings who make choices, these are always within the limits of our natures: whether physical-chemical, biological, psychological, or social. To claim that man has no nature but only an "existence" is to make inexplicable the facts of science that we already know about him, and these are considerable. And to admit that he has a biological nature and not a psychological nature is to erect a false dualism

between body and mind. "Consciousness" is dispensable as a category of explanation within the sciences. And the facts of awareness are explainable to some degree at least by experimental methods. I would ask that the Existentialists study our sciences of man: instead of a "philosophical anthropology" which they claim to give us, I would ask for a "scientific anthropology." Thus the Existentialists, and especially Kierkegaard, are deficient in their accounts of man because they leave out science.

But Existentialism is a *normative* philosophy of practical import as well as a "metaphysics of human being." The Existentialists are saying something important, I submit, when they point to the fact of human decision and to the "ultimate" character of *some* human decisions: for our choices to some extent *are* existential; and they *may* involve the whole being of a person. But the Existentialists do not sufficiently appreciate that most of our choices are particularized and connected to actual concrete *contexts*. Our choices are *not* purely subjective; nor need they be capricious or arbitrary; and external facts and social norms within the context are intimately related to our value choices. Thus we find already present in every situation structures which help to provide some basis for choice. And we need not, except in the most extreme cases, call into question the whole framework of the situation or of our being. There are important norms available, such as those which practical reason and the applied sciences and arts have discovered, and we constantly use these in reaching wise decisions.

There is a close parallel on one point at least between present-day Existentialism and the logical positivism of the nineteen-thirties: both try to reduce ethical choice to emotive subjectivism. For the positivists, ethical judgments were expressive and imperative, and not based upon factual belief. Today within philosophy there is widespread criticism of the emotive theory: for in ordinary life we do argue about our ethical choices, we think that there are some standards of reasonableness, and we recognize that there are "good reasons" and "bad reasons" for decision. Moreover, our scientific knowledge about nature and man may help us to make more effective and better informed choices. Both Existentialism and the emotive theory are correct when they claim that knowledge of facts by itself does not tell us what to do. We cannot deduce an "ought"

sentence from an "is" sentence. Yet knowledge may still be relevant to decision and action, and the degree to which we expand our understanding we expand our ability to make decisions. If absolutism cannot be defended in value theory, the alternative is not complete subjectivism, but perhaps a kind of middle ground, objective relativism.

Another difficulty with the Existentialist theory is this: we are social beings to a greater extent than it will allow. Most of our projects and plans, hopes and expectations, passions and affections involve other persons. The "self" is not merely an "inwardly" existing being but is to be defined by interactions in a natural *and* social cultural world. The "I" is individuated and given meaning by the "we," and the "we" need not necessarily destroy the individual but, indeed, is required for his very preservation and fulfillment. The intellectual, aesthetic, scientific, religious, and philosophical developments of culture are essential for the nourishment of the individual in any of these dimensions. Without them, man would be a helpless beast. Only with them can he achieve the highest reaches of "individuality."

But, of course, Existentialism seeks to emphasize the "ultimate human condition"—for despair and non-being are said to await every individual. For, it is said, we may call into question at any time the whole project of our life or the entire structure of our moral or social code. Here the metaphysics of human being comes to the fore. The Existentialists claim that though our particular choices may be made in terms of the particular rules, values, and facts present in contexts of choice (and may provide some basis for "reasonable" action) we may nonetheless call into question our *basic* commitments. And one may always ask, as does Heidegger, "Why does anything exist at all?" or with Camus, "Why live?" It is this latter question that is said to be of crucial relevance to normative choice. Man may always inquire into the "meaning" of life.

But if we reject Kierkegaard's defense of the Christian explanation of man—as I think we must because of a total lack of evidence and because inwardness is *not* the criteria of truth—then according to atheistic Existentialism, at least, one is led to inevitable despair. Atheistic Existentialism begins at the same point as Kierkegaard—the human condition; but it never really succeeds in overcoming

man's basic moral dilemma. For atheistic Existentialism, one can give *no reason* for my being, other than I am. And one may, as Camus, find it ultimately "absurd" that I exist or indeed that anything exists. The bitter dread and foreboding implicit in non-being, we are told, are thus ominously present, lurking, ever waiting to be called forth.

Undoubtedly the mature individual should be aware of the "human condition" and put things in their proper focus; he should strive for free and authentic existence. But is it not a question of to what degree and to what extent such "ultimate" awareness should absorb one's attention? One English philosopher quipped: "We all have to die one day; why do they keep reminding us of it?" Unfortunately, the Existentialist mood may become excessive in its metaphysical anguish. And this can accentuate and create the very mood that it claims is ominously present. While Existentialist awareness is important in its proper place, it thus can be distorted. Excessive concern with the roots of my personal being (or the lack of them) may even dampen my natural enthusiasm and gusto for life. In contexts of crisis, an attitude of despair may become prominent, as in the death of a loved one, the loss of a career, hopeless frustration, racial violence, or war. And here one may well inquire into the basis of his ultimate values and commitments.

But actually basic existential questions are rarely posed by ordinary people, except in times of crisis, even though they may be raised theoretically by philosophers.

Our time is a time of indecision and drift, and many people look hopefully to Existentialism as an appropriate philosophy. Marxism today presents a philosophy of growth and expresses an overenthusiastic optimism reminiscent of the Enlightment, basing upon Marxist ideology and technological science the messianic hope of mankind. The Existentialists claim that this lacks a sense of the "tragic" and that it has lost the individual. Yet aspects of a philosophy of growth have wide appeal to the underdeveloped countries of the world which look ahead to a better life. But many in the West have become frustrated—by our relative loss of power and prestige in the world, by the nuclear terror, and so on. And for some, there has been a real "failure of nerve" and a loss of faith in the capacity of reason or science to develop the good life, with the result that

many individuals have turned from confidence in social action or growth to individual pathos. But one must, I submit, have profound reservations about a lapse into the Existentialist mood. Surely we must pay heed to our existential situations, yet I do not believe that excessive attention to it is necessary or desirable, nor that it is the whole of philosophy of life. Existentialists would no doubt retort that I here express too much of the "naive" frontier spirit of America to really appreciate the subtler pathos of human existence. And I readily admit the charge; but I would defend the posture. Life carries within itself its own seeds for development; whether one is to live a robust and expansive life or to retreat in the face of our precarious animal existence depends upon the attitude that is adopted. Existentialists might deny that they have overemphasized the element of despair or that their philosophy is a philosophy of inaction. Yet the *tendency*, I believe, is still there; and as a result, Existentialism fails to provide the challenging impetus for a good life of high motivation; and it does not measure up to the highest needs of man, whether of the contemporary or of any other age. In particular, the regression to a doctrine that "subjectivity is truth," if taken seriously enough, may have fearful consequences; and it can undermine one of the central factors that has contributed to the greatness of modern civilization, especially in the Western world, and that is the development of objective knowledge. The ideals of reason and science have not been effectively refuted, yet they are in constant danger of being undermined by an Existentialist type of reaction.

Perhaps there is a value to Existential philosophy; but this is only incidental to it: Existentialism, at the very least, has compelled us radically to re-examine once again our basic presuppositions, for it has brought to light new facts and values that we overlooked. But surely we must go beyond its narrow confines. For the concentration by Existentialists such as Kierkegaard upon certain traits of the human condition to the exclusion of others can only distort the true and full character of life. And the Existential attitude may have the effect (even though the Existentialists may deny it) of drying up and exhausting the very source from which all things human spring—the creative well of life itself.

The Other Side of the Pyramid

By TRACY MONTMINY

I must explain how the Pyramid sits
Straight against one of the City gates
On a nondescript square that is somewhere near
San Paolo fuori le Mura.

Who could say
(Unless he saw a certain hill, and knew the way)
There was a Roman dump, and here an English poet lay?

Vulgar Testaccio means big, ugly head; but
The testimony of Thomas Browne as to
Testaceousness in urns turns the mind to
Learned testaceo: shelled, (skulled), of clay.
Both sound the same, and both do
To name the spot where ancient tosspots threw
Ancient crackpots away.
Things, when they don't grow down in Rome, grow up.
Today, it's a big hill.
Its aspect at the distance where I stand
Demands that I go up,
But near at hand it's still
Sporco, not-fit-for-pigs Testaccio.
The rough paths of loose stones and worthless bits
Of pots grit underfoot, and it's
Crowned with a Calvary cross of plumber's pipes.
Everything fits.

TRACY MONTMINY is a painter and teaches in the Art Department of the University of Missouri.

Now as to the site of the Pyramid,
All are in eyeshot: it,
Testaccio, John Keats—
From here. But not from there.
I mean, from the shabby square.
There, it's all terribly hurried.
Here, Cestius meant to stay buried
Under plenty of stone in the Roman countryside.
Hence, none of the noise outside hits
The elegiac side. It's
Much more dignified.

The Melancholy Tiger

(After Viewing a Painting by Hans Memelink)

By LARRY RUBIN

The eyes, I think, are what you see
First: opaque green burrs, like ovals
With angular edges, burning inward toward
The tiger heart. The gold and black, thick
Pulsating bars, press the velvet mask
Around those two raw discs of green.
Pupilless they stare through circles in
The soul, flaming spirals that descend
To icy depths beneath the jungle green.

LARRY RUBIN, whose poems have appeared widely, is presently an exchange teacher at the University of Krakow, Poland. He last appeared in the *Review* in the Fall issue.

You Better Pay Attention

By FREDERICK REBSAMEN

■ It was a quiet evening for eight o'clock. The only customer in the liquor store was a tall, middle-aged man who stood facing the proprietor across the counter, talking:

"I sez I want that car back tomorrow morning, he sez Oh, we can't get that car out tomorrow, I sez You'd by God better get that car out tomorrow, who screwed up those brakes in the first place and cost me fifty dollars for nothing, he sez Well, I'll do my best, I sez look. . . ."

A second customer came into the store. A soft bell chimed when he stepped on the rubber mat just inside the door. For a moment there was only the memory of the little bell as the three stood looking at each other.

"What's yours?" said the proprietor.

"A pint of Old Sourmash."

The tall man leaned against the counter, stared at the ceiling, frowned. His thin, grey hair was hatless; he wore a cheap grey gabardine topcoat and a brown suit, with no tie. His plain brown shoes were scuffed and dull, and his large red wrists protruded a couple of inches from his sleeves.

"That's the trouble with those goddamn garages," he said to the second customer. "They got more work than they can handle, and they got you where they want you, and they know it."

Nothing.

"I told this guy Look, I sez, be reasonable, you put new linings in

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them brakes six weeks ago and I almost had a wreck this afternoon because the damned things went out, why didn't you fix 'em up the first time, he sez You'll have to speak to the manager, I sez You're damned right I'll speak to the manager, where is he, he sez. . . ."

"Something else for you, now?"

"That's all."

"Thanks a lot, now, and come back."

The tall man watched the second customer leaving the store. He stared through the door for a long moment after the other had disappeared, then turned back to the proprietor.

"Anyway, I sez look. . . ."

"Anything else you needed today?"

"What? No, hell, I already bought a pint, that oughta last me."

"I didn't want you to forget it. You left it at the end of the counter there."

The tall man walked over and engulfed the pint in a large hand. He stood looking at it for a moment. Then he walked back and leaned on the counter and faced the proprietor.

"Whaddya think of a bastard like that? You know how long he kept that car?"

Nothing.

"Hey! You know how long he kept that car?"

"What?"

"Now wait just a damn minute! You ain't paying me any attention at all, are you?"

"Look, mister, I got work to do."

"What work you got to do? There ain't any more customers in here. What work you talking about?"

Nothing.

"By God! Just who the hell you think you are?" shouted the tall man, slamming his huge hand jarringly on the counter, jingling the liquor displays.

The small bell chimed again and both turned to stare at the third customer.

"What'll it be?"

"Gimme a six-pack of Bergerhof."

The tall man leaned back on the counter, appraising the third customer.

"You ever try Dutch Fancy?" he said.

"Yeah, I tried it. I like Bergerhof better."

"Bergerhof ain't real lager though."

"Neither is Dutch Fancy."

"The hell it ain't! Look, I been drinking beer. . . ."

"That be all?"

"Yeah. I got some change here."

The tall man watched the third customer disappear. He turned and faced the proprietor.

"All right. You're all a bunch of wise guys. Everybody's a wise guy. Some of these days somebody might punch your frigging teeth out."

"Mister, don't make me reach under this counter."

The tall man's mouth dropped slowly open.

"Reach under the *counter*? Well, you goddamn, lousy. . . ."

The proprietor reached under the counter and grasped something. Abruptly, the tall man changed his manner.

"O.K., O.K., knock it off. I'm getting out of this vinegar shop."

He swept the pint up in one hand and stalked out of the door, shoving the bottle furiously at a pocket in his topcoat.

At ten minutes past midnight the proprietor locked the door and walked across the street to his old Plymouth. He was bending over the front door, fumbling at his keys, when the huge hand clamped down over his left shoulder. He remained in the stooping position, rapidly deciding whether to whirl and knock aside whatever weapon the man might have, then kick him in the groin, or whether to rise slowly, put up his hands, then turn and face the man so he could have a better look at what he was up against. He was pretty sure whose hand it was.

Before he could decide, the tall man spoke:

"Now don't you stand up, and don't you turn around. You just get in there and start driving, and don't try no funny business unless you want this bowie knife sticking out through your ribs."

The tall man gave a warning jab that pierced the proprietor's topcoat and indented his back through his suit. The proprietor changed his mind and decided to obey. He got in behind the wheel, and the tall man scrambled into the back seat, placing the point of

the large knife gently against the proprietor's neck just beneath the base of his skull.

"Drive down Third Street and turn west on Highland," he said.

"Look, I don't know what you want. The money's in a safe in the back of a shop, if you want that. I ain't got any on me."

"Drive down Third Street and turn west on Highland."

"Listen, I didn't mean. . . ."

The point of the knife pressed against his neck.

"Drive down Third Street and . . . ."

"All right, all right. I'm going."

When he turned into Highland, the proprietor looked in the mirror.

"Where are we going?" he said.

"Just drive on down Highland."

"Look, you'll get in more trouble than it's worth if you. . . ."

Again the knife pressed, and the proprietor shut up. His stomach sucked inward and he belched nervously.

They passed the city limits and drove on into the darkness along an almost deserted road. About five miles outside of town the tall man tapped the proprietor on the shoulder.

"Turn right at that dirt road," he said.

The proprietor turned into the road. They had left all lights and cars and houses behind now. Soon they began to climb. After a quarter of a mile the road curved sharply and then they started up a steep incline that lasted for almost a half mile. At the top of the incline the road levelled, and the tall man shifted about in the back seat, peering out of the window on his left.

"Pull over here," he said. "You can get off the road over by that big oak."

The proprietor stopped the car by the oak tree but did not shut off the motor. He hoped that the tall man would get out first.

"Shut off the motor and turn out your lights," said the tall man. "And gimme those keys."

When the lights went out, the proprietor could see that they were on a high rise above the town. He remembered reading something once about an auxiliary water reservoir west of the town on top of the highest hill in that area.

"God!" said the tall man. "Look at those lights!"

Below them lay the sleeping town, lights shimmering gently through the atmosphere.

"Don't that make you feel good, looking at those lights?"

Nothing.

The knife pressed again.

"I said, don't that make you feel good, looking at those lights?"

"Yeah, sure. It sure does."

"Damn right it does. I love this place, and listen, you can't hear a thing. Roll down your window."

The proprietor rolled down the window and listened. There was not a sound.

"Ain't that wonderful? Sit up here and see all those lights down in town and can't hear a damn thing. Ain't that wonderful?"

"It sure is. That sure is wonderful."

"Yeah. O.K. Turn on your lights again."

The proprietor switched on his headlights, hope resurging cautiously.

"Now get out of the car and stand in front of it."

The proprietor got slowly out of the car, holding his stomach. He hadn't considered the car, with that big knife against his neck. The tall man got out and leaned against the front door.

"Get a little bit further out so the lights will pick you up better. There. Hold it. Now, turn around and face the lights and just stand still."

The proprietor stood blinking into the lights. He could not see the other.

"You might as well relax, because you're going to be there for a while. But stay on your feet. I wouldn't advise you to sit down. Now, as I was saying, you know how long he kept that car?"

"No, I don't. How long did he keep it?"

"Well, he kept it *four days*! The son-of-a-bitch. I went back around the next morning to pick it up, the morning after I left it there, and he sez I'm sorry, buddy, your car ain't ready yet, and I sez What the hell you mean it ain't ready yet, where's that manager, and he sez The manager ain't in yet, and I sez Well by God when will he be in, and he sez. . . ."

At first, relief calmed the proprietor's stomach somewhat, and he listened attentively to the tall man, asking questions when they were called for, occasionally clucking with sympathy or amazement

at the treatment the tall man had received. After a while he began to feel slightly neauseous, as he always did when he stood in one place for too long. He shifted his weight from one leg to the other but that was not much help. Finally he began to sway.

"Is it all right if I sit down?" he asked.

"What?"

"I said, do you mind if I sit down? I get sick when I stand up too long. I'm interested in your story but I'll get sick if I don't sit down."

"All right, go ahead. But I don't advise you to start dozing or anything like that."

"Don't worry. I won't."

He sat down in the dust, facing the lights, crossing his legs and pulling his feet up under him, holding both ankles and pulling back against them to relieve the soreness in his back.

"So the third morning I went around and this time that goddamn manager had taken the trouble to show up on time for a change, so I walked into his office and I sez All right, look, six weeks ago I brought this car in here. . . ."

The proprietor kept his face lifted into the headlights and listened. He could not estimate the passage of time. After a while his eyes grew heavy and hot from the lights, and he struggled to keep them open. Soon they were drooping shut, completely beyond his control, and each time they shut he jerked desperately at their muscles to open them again. His back had long since become numb, and his legs were dead beneath him. And then he was sprawled on his back in the dust and the tall man was standing over him.

"You go to sleep like that again, mister, and I'll do a hell of a lot worse than just kick you. You got that?"

"Yes I . . . I'm sorry. I didn't mean to, but that light. . . ."

"Light, hell! You just ain't paying attention. Sit up."

He sat up again, wide awake now. He squinted at the lights and tried to look attentive.

"When I got the bill at the end of the month I opened it and by God I almost dropped my teeth when I saw how much it was. You know how much that bill was?"

"No, how much was it?"

"Hold on to your hat now—it was exactly forty-seven dollars and sixteen cents!"

"My goodness, forty-seven dollars."

"Forty-seven dollars and sixteen cents. You know what I did? I took that bill and went back to that garage and walked into the manager's office and I sez Well, if you think you're going to. . . ."

The horizon began to appear, and still the tall man talked on. When the light came up enough to pick out the trees, the tall man stopped in the middle of a sentence and looked around.

"Well, I'll be damned," he said. "Look what time it's getting to be. We better head back for town. We can talk on the way."

On the way back in, the proprietor was very calm. He became enthusiastic about the tall man's story, asked several questions, made several insulting comments about the management of the garage. When they got back to Highland Street, the tall man stopped his story.

"Pull over there," he said, "by that mailbox. I'll get out here. I got to go to work pretty soon."

The tall man got out of the car and stood leaning against the driver's door, talking into the open window.

"I sure enjoyed that conversation. Didn't you?"

"I certainly did. It was very interesting."

"It wasn't so bad, was it?"

"No, really, it was very nice."

"Well . . . look, mister, I appreciate the way you listened and all, but I won't bother you no more."

"Oh, that's all right."

"Well, so long. I got to go."

The tall man walked rapidly away from the car, his long legs pulling him abruptly into the distance. The proprietor jerked the car in gear and raced along the street, peering anxiously to the right and left. He saw a filling station with an outside phone booth and pulled the car up into the station. He ran to the phone and clawed in his pocket for a dime, then deposited the dime and dialed "6" for police. He let the phone ring once and hung up.

"What the hell," he said, leaning against the inside of the booth. "What the hell, the poor bastard. I'm starving to death."

He left the booth and got back in his car and drove downtown to an all night cafe.

Where Christians Are a Minority

By R. A. SCHERMERHORN

■ The West, its own conversion buried deep in its tribal memory, slumbered for centuries in the dream of a Christian world. From Peter the Hermit to Billy Graham, the Crusaders, the Jesuits, the Jehovah's Witnesses spread the word of the Christian god among the heathen. Even among the less fervent, the idea of a Christian-dominated world seemed reasonable and just: it was the pattern of their own just and reasonable society. But the rise of new nations with their own dreams interrupted this Western ideal before it was realized, and just as the white man is awakening to the fact that he is a minority in the world, so is the Christian awakening to the fact that he is too. In the new nations of the nineteenth century, including all the Latin American countries, Christianity survived the revolutions and become the dominant religion of the new regimes. In the twentieth century, however, it is proving less hardy. In some places, the missionaries and their influences are being swept out with the rest of the colonial equipment; in others, pockets of Christians remain as minority groups in their own new nations. On a sojourn to India in 1959-60 I had an opportunity to see how one of these minorities was faring under independence.

Christians are as small a group in India as the Jews are in Europe and America; most Indians are as meagerly informed about Christians in their land as are Gentiles about Jews in America. There is, of course, a highly significant difference in the background of the two

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groups, since the Christians in India were associated in the past with colonial masters who have now withdrawn. According to the 1951 census, the eight million Christians of India formed just over two per cent of the entire population, and the thirty-five million Muslims nearly nine and one-half per cent of the whole. Unofficial estimates of the number of Christians in 1960 placed their figures at about ten million with approximately half Roman Catholic and half Protestant. While the first entrance of Christianity into India is traditionally traced back to the first two centuries A.D., the great bulk of adherents came into the group in the latter half of the nineteenth and the early twentieth century, especially in the so-called "mass movements" when most members (chiefly Untouchables) entered the Christian ranks. This coincides roughly with the high tide of British rule.

Unlike Hinduism, both Islam and Christianity are proselytizing religions, gaining most of their adherents from among the poor or depressed classes. Yet in the eyes of perhaps most Indians today, Islam is regarded as more indigenous while Christianity is considered foreign. Though the process by which millions of Hindus became Muslim is still an unexplored area of history, at least it seems reasonably clear that this religious change did not occur solely because of the activities of missionaries from abroad. While military and political pressure undoubtedly accounted for many victories of Islam, this can hardly explain its rapid growth in Bengal and southern India during periods when Muslim authority was relatively weak. And in spite of the turbulence attending much of Moghul rule, the centuries of more moderate reign that followed gave sufficient time for Islam to become woven deeply into the texture of Indian life.

In contrast, Christianity, in spite of its longer history in India, had comparatively little influence before the advent of British colonialism. (The Portuguese movement in Goa was of quite minor importance.) Missionaries from abroad were its most influential agents and chiefly responsible for its inroads on Hinduism. It soon became evident that none of the three groups entering India from the West (traders, missionaries, and colonial administrators) intended to make India more than a temporary home; with few exceptions, they came for a few brief years and were followed by replacements from Europe or America. Centers of political, economic, and mission authority were in the West, effectively screened from Indian scrutiny and hence alien at the source.

From the latter half of the eighteenth to the end of the nineteenth century, Indian Christians gained influence in the wake of colonial policy. At first they not only met resistance from the Hindus but suffered neglect, indifference, and then downright hostility from British traders and government officials who drew lucrative profits from pilgrim taxes at Hindu and Muslim shrines. For a time, no preaching of Christianity was allowed in British East India territories, no Christians allowed in the ranks of Indian officials, and in Mysore Christians were even debarred from courts of justice. However, as British officialdom devoted educational funds solely to foster English culture and in 1844 opened the entire Indian Civil Service (except the 750 highest positions) to English-speaking Indians "without distinction of race or creed," new opportunities arose for the Christians. In the meantime, the Bible Society and other religious organizations in England lobbied in Parliament for the separation of the East India Company from its alliance with Hinduism as well as for official support to missions. The latter did not come, but after the "Mutiny" of 1857 when the Crown took over direct rule of India, Queen Victoria stated a policy of benevolent neutrality toward all Indian religions; soon the temples and mosques in British hands were relinquished to Hindu and Muslim corporations. Since the Christians had shown themselves loyal to their English rulers during the uprising, it then became natural for governors and viceroys to show them increasing favor without the same anxiety about Hindu disapproval. On the other side, the Christians became increasingly attached to the colonial power. Since the firm position of the British raj gave a halo effect to Western ways, Christians who adopted them in increasing numbers found their status elevated in the eyes of many educated Indians.

Politically, the status of Christians also depended on British communal policy* from 1909 till the coming of independence. The Congress Party had assumed a moderate line until about 1900, then became more militant in its nationalism, forging new weapons of

* "Communal policy" was the policy developed to simplify British colonial rule by treating religious groups as homogeneous, cohesive units distinct from, or even antagonistic to, each other. By stereotyping each religious community as a group whose adherents all had the same social, political, and economic interests, and by ignoring internal divisions, it helped to shape the creature of colonial imagination into a political reality fateful for India's future.

boycott, *hartal*, and finally *satyagraha*. Since the Congress was overwhelmingly Hindu, the time was ripe for the British to use "counterpoise" against them to safeguard the royal power.

Beginning with concessions to the Muslim League in 1909, the British recognized a series of special claims made by religious, caste, and other separate groupings. Following the lead of the Muslims, the Sikhs, Anglo-Indians, Untouchables, and Christians followed in asking for special "protection," representation, or separate electorates. Though it was not stated in the contract, the British tacitly expected loyalty to the ruling authority as a *quid pro quo*. This process gave the leaders of such minority groups access to positions of prominence and authority in the civil service, the army, the railways, the communications system, the universities, and the provincial councils. Christians trained in mission schools achieved higher literacy rates (in English) than most other groups, and under the communal policy gained many high-ranking posts. Even though the great mass of Christians remained poor, the status of the entire group reflected the prestige of their representatives in the middle echelons of power where they rubbed shoulders on an equal plane with Brahmins and upper caste Hindus, often to the chagrin of the latter.

Within the Christian community, unique forces shaped its way of life. For the most part, new converts to the faith came from the peasantry at the lower end of the caste hierarchy—illiterate, landless, poor, and servile. The European missionary or priest became a magical figure who could not only bring assurance of supernatural salvation, but also deliverance from hunger, poverty, and exploitation. Most of all, he brought sympathy for the plight of the outcaste—a feature as rare as it was unexpected. When the convert was baptized, he proudly accepted the new Christian name given him by the missionary—a symbol of security to set him off from the surrounding Hindu community.

To remove new Christians from ostracism or persecution in their own villages, the mission not infrequently took converts bodily into the compound or walled area surrounding a church or bungalow, providing simple jobs for the newcomers for subsistence. Though this was a pittance, it was nevertheless more regular and abundant than the villagers had had before. The segregating process of "compound living," however, left the convert totally unfitted to earn his

way in the larger society, a problem that became painfully evident when any mission had to be closed. Starvation or near starvation of the Christians promptly resulted. Only retrospectively did Western Christian leaders realize the full implications of their converts' former status as members of a religious, occupational, and village matrix. By leaving the Hindu community, these converts automatically cut their occupational ties to enter an isolated social system where their old skills were unusable and new ones were rarely trained. Although "compound living" was not, by any means, uniformly adopted, it was nevertheless widely prevalent and had repercussions in the Christian community for decades, ultimately giving rise to the many schemes for vocational training that belatedly appeared.

An important result of the mass movements into Christianity, therefore, was a sort of dependence pattern fostered by previous centuries of pariah living and accentuated by the leadership structure of the Christian community (so antithetical to the closely interwoven pattern of caste). The missionary became the "father and mother" and in the early stages not only provided, but was expected to provide, food, clothing, jobs, education, and medical care. On the one side was the missionary socialized in Western culture with its plentiful consumer goods which for him were normative, setting up a whole series of aspirations which he then projected as "needs" of the new convert; on the other side, a new member of the Christian community suddenly awakened to indefinite expansion of his aspiration levels following his conversion and the pervasive influence of the religious leader. Since the series of new "needs" was continually expanding, it perpetuated the dependency pattern far into the future.

In order to keep up with these demands, the missionary directed more and more appeals to the older Christian churches in Europe and America to provide ever-increasing funds to support schools, hospitals, agricultural training centers, and churches in India. As additional personnel were required to staff these institutions, directors, professionals, and supervisors at the upper levels came from overseas while intermediate and lower echelons of the staffs were supplied from the ranks of the Indian Christians themselves. As Christian institutions matured, the marked differential between "Western" and "Indian" salaries became firmly embedded in the system. Even more important, compensation for all leaders was

furnished almost entirely by churches, boards, and religious orders in the West. Thus to an interpersonal dependency was added an institutional dependency.

Education assumed a salient position among Christians. The leaders, always strongly oriented in this direction, founded hundreds of schools, colleges, and institutes where a new generation of clerks, teachers, ministers, priests, and white collar workers were graduated for new positions in a changing India. How many of them fitted into colonial service has already been mentioned. What was perhaps unexpected, or if not unexpected, unprepared for, was the rush to Christian schools of Hindus, Parsis, Sihks, Muslims, and aboriginals. The overweening importance of English instruction as a prerequisite for upward social mobility stimulated increasing numbers of non-Christians from wealthy or ambitious families to attend mission schools in the early twentieth century, beginning a trend that continued even after the departure of the British. Particularly influential in this process was the novel emphasis, at least in India, on the education of women in Christian schools. Although at first this was too daring a step for Hindu girls, the barriers soon came down when parents recognized that educated sons might well prefer educated wives, and that they could retain or control the subordinate status of women by properly arranged marriages along these lines. Eventually parents found a way to accommodate the institution of marriage to new conditions by the simple substitution of stated amounts of education for stated amounts of money in the dowry. A girl with a high school education would thus, let us say, require 500 rupees less in her dowry, and with a college education the amount could rise to 1,000 rupees. At the same time the girl might have a chance to secure a "better" husband measured in terms of actual and potential earning power correlative with *his* education. As adjustments of this kind were made, Hindu girls entered Christian schools at an accelerated pace, almost matching that of the boys.

Before 1947, then, thousands of non-Christian graduates looked back to Christian schools as their alma maters, and this reservoir of goodwill (including the families of the graduates) was one upon which the Christian community could draw in a time of crisis.

Beginning with the 1930's, not a single crisis but a whole series of them befell the Christian minority. In the 1930's the economic

depression in America and Europe brought severe reductions in funds allotted to missions, churches, and schools. Many institutions closed their doors while still more reduced staff, lowered salaries, and decreased their services. Many missionaries returned to the West and were not replaced. For a number of years the backwash of nationalism in the Christian community had produced an increased demand for greater representation of Indian personnel in ecclesiastical offices. In the face of changed conditions, this policy was now implemented—by necessity. But it occurred at a time when the usual flow of financial support dwindled and when Indian Christian leaders assuming new responsibilities were forced by circumstances to turn to their own congregations for contributions. Not only were these lay bodies relatively impoverished, but the tradition of dependency impeded the change of attitude required for anything like self support. Even in earlier days, parishioners who abased themselves before the foreign missionary frequently humiliated the Indian pastors who asked them for donations; few ministers would put themselves in a position where they would have to receive full support from the depressed classes among the Christians if there were any possibility that they could work for the mission and receive an unquestioned salary. Now that these workers were thrown back on direct contacts with village churches and city *basti* or slum settlement groups cut off from mission finances, their lot became increasingly unhappy, and many left the service of the church altogether. Village after village was left without ecclesiastical leadership; others temporized with occasional visits from a month to as much as a year apart from religious ministrants in distant cities.

World War II proved to be an added blow, for it not only increased the rate at which missionaries left but in time so restricted all travel that replacements were virtually impossible. The anomalous condition of Indian nationalism in the 1940's deepened a number of internal divisions within the Christian community, making it more vulnerable to outside attack. As the Congress Party refused to sanction the British war effort unless India were granted full independence, it became evident that Britain counted on her protected minorities in India to rally to the Allied cause. On the whole this confidence was not misplaced, though the Christians were somewhat less wholehearted in their support than some of the others, notably the Sikhs.

The older generation of Christians, together with most white collar workers and a particularly vocal group of missionaries, supported the British either openly or secretly. Another group, some of them pacifists, some conservatives, preferred to remain neutral. Only a tiny handful of the younger generation among laymen, pastors, and missionaries supported Gandhi and Nehru; their influence, however, was minimal.

Here the Christian community was reaping the harvest of the close attachment to the British, as well as the earlier missionary's preoccupation with forms of worship and organization derived from the West; the Indian church not only showed its Western origin but this now made it the target of Indian patriots. The story of the missionary who tore a Gandhi cap from the head of an Indian convert with the remark that Christians have no right to be nationalists is symbolic of what was, in many ways, the de-nationalization of Indians in the church. That the great bulk of Christians should be unmoved and stand aside when their Indian fellow nationals sacrificed property and life for independence, looking for help in the cause—help that was not forthcoming—turned the patriots against the Christians in fury. "They are no true Indians," was the taunt.

Within the church, missionaries who were pro-British or at least passionately neutral were in a position to appoint or elect Indian leaders in the church during this period. Not only did they favor the "safe" men in positions of responsibility, but Indians looking for promotion found that they could secure their goal by convincing the missionaries that they *were* safe. Thus while the church was becoming Indianized in color, it continued to be Western in outlook with leaders who perpetuated bureaucratic denominational viewpoints. They were likewise men who had little or no influence in the wider Hindu society that became dominant after independence. Yet it is only fair to say that many, if not most, were able administrators whose abilities matched their counterparts in the new government quite favorably. The new officialdom, however, tended to ignore them.

Shortly after independence, the partition of Pakistan from India and the attendant Hindu-Muslim massacres shook India to its very foundations. The new constitution with its declared rights for religious minorities and Harijans could not prevent militant Hindus,

now that they were members of the unhampered majority, from wreaking revenge on Muslims or from murdering Gandhi whose tolerance was repugnant to them. "Political Hinduism," suppressed so long by the British, gained covert support in the Congress ranks and multiplied outside them in the conservative Mahasabha or the Jan Sangh party. Communalism became the new enemy; it was communalism that divided India and tore Pakistan from its body. Communalism became the name for everything divisive and for every threat to Indian unity. The massacres had proved its very real danger, public opinion overwhelmingly condemned it, and political leaders from moderates to radicals pointed to it with abhorrence. Its full force was usually directed against the Muslims, but in time it became a convenient tool to belabor other minorities as well.

While group prejudices under the British were more than a little fostered on the basis of divide and rule, the play of such prejudices was kept under control by an administration above the battle (though religious ties with the Christians had their effect). After British control ceased, prejudices were released from pressure and, in the majority group of Hindus who formed over eighty per cent of the population, they were freed to work in a more unconstrained way. Long-nursed grievances mushroomed into demands for revenge, and although the Muslims received the lion's share, Christians were the target for much of its deflected force as well. Not only were charges of unpatriotic conduct hurled, but old accusations about "rice Christians" were renewed, and the uncomfortably accurate jibe at the Western ways of Christians now took on added sting in the midst of a blossoming renaissance of Indian dancing, music, and the arts. In this flow of charges came a relatively new accusation: that conversion constituted an anti-national act. Paradoxically, this challenge was based on a quite valid premise, since Indian tolerance of all religious thought treated all these views as having partial truth, none of them absolute. Conversion necessarily denied this premise and therefore became an act unfriendly to the genius of India. One state legislature even passed a law making it illegal to convert anyone to a different faith except in the presence of a magistrate. Though this provision was later rescinded as unconstitutional, it nevertheless showed which way the wind was blowing and the way in which tolerance and intolerance became confused.

Today, in independent India, the great majority of Christians in the labor force are working for non-Christian employers; their number is constantly growing. Fewer and fewer have the old protection of laboring for Christian institutions where paternalistic care is given them. Those who have migrated to the cities and find unskilled labor in industry unintentionally cut themselves off from their own religious community because, on the whole, the church has not kept in touch with the factory worker. Others who find places in offices of private or public enterprises are aware of veiled discrimination either in securing positions or gaining promotion. The old privileged civil service status has gone and Christians are further bereft of aids available to their Hindu colleagues—caste and family. As before independence, almost no Christians are entrepreneurs owning their own businesses; not only do they lack the requisite capital, but they fear too close dependence on the changing whims of a Hindu clientele, and the central government is favoring the public economy in any case, making it more and more difficult for businessmen to get a foothold.

How has the Christian community reacted to their lowered status in India? To a considerable degree by self-segregation in neighborhoods and *mohallas* in the city and by withdrawing as much as possible from their fellow-villagers in the country—by becoming as inconspicuous as possible. Name-changing now proceeds in the opposite direction, and a growing number of Christians are dropping their Christian names as handicaps in favor of names more familiar in the language of their area. The great majority of Christian adults also vote for the Congress Party—another technique that enables them to be inconspicuous and safe, for it allies them, however temporarily, with the powers that be. Such voting rarely brings them political representation or party leadership, but it nevertheless wears the aura of security. Christians also form their permanent friendships almost entirely within their own religious circle, rarely forming close ties beyond it. Marriage is within the Christian community; transgression of this rule can meet with quite severe sanctions both from the Christian and the non-Christian side. A few exceptions occur among educated Christians girls who marry into comfortable Hindu families, but in most cases these girls and their

families are not devout Christians but live at the periphery of the Christian community.

Anomalies exist at both upper and lower levels of the Christian group. In higher strata are the prestige schools under Christian auspices attended by students whose parents still regard English as a status symbol and prefer a regime of controlled discipline and rigorous work to the state schools with their increasingly crowded classrooms, harried teachers, and indiscriminate mixing of higher and lower strata. Thus the Christian schools (at least those charging tuition) represent for the Indian parent many of the functions associated with private schools in the United States. Most of these Christian schools today subsist on the fees paid by non-Christian parents whose children make up more than half the student body. Christian students, most of whom are too poor to afford tuition, receive special scholarships or have their fees remitted. Thus there is an economic and social gulf between Hindu and Christian students in the schools themselves. Administration and staff, however, by reason of supplying a needed service for upper ranking families, occupy a higher status in the community than other Christians. As long as the English language keeps its hold, this position is likely to remain, though new regulations requiring teachers to be selected from state panels will doubtless increase the number of Hindu teachers as time goes on. The rising tide of linguistic "patriotism" may render the *coup de grace* to such schools when the movement reaches its peak.

At the lower end of the scale are the Christians of the depressed classes. Special legislation of the central government makes available many special benefits (including scholarships) to Harijans. Although the Christians have not recognized Untouchability as a principle, and although conversion is usually regarded by Christians as removing the converts from the caste system altogether, there is now a trend in the opposite direction. Since Christians from Harijan families are still considered Harijan by many if not most Hindus, Christian leaders are beginning to encourage them to apply for Harijan benefits under the law, thus taking advantage of their traditional status. To the extent that it opens up scholarship opportunities, Untouchability has become an asset rather than a curse. While most Christians still do not accept this ideology for their members from Harijan

origins, Catholics appear to emphasize it more than Protestants; the latter, however, are beginning to change in this respect.

There is a relative lack of cohesion among Christians throughout India as a whole. In the villages solidarity is almost wholly dependent on regular pastoral leadership which is lacking in many areas. My initial impressions seem to show that group cohesion attains greater strength among Catholics than among Protestants with their inherited denominational divisions. At any rate, in the villages with a sizeable number of Christians, their segregation from the rest of the peasantry is facilitated by their frequent Harijan status. I visited a village near Hyderabad where the Hindus never used the term Christian but only Harijan to refer to the Christians in one corner of the village. A great many village Christians join in the Hindu festivals, make use of sorcerors or astrologers, are married with Hindu rites when the pastor cannot come, and maintain the dowry system intact. The pervasiveness of caste in rural regions has its effect on Christians; where there is a powerful caste majority in an area, its predominance and pressure will be found in the church also. More careful research may well show that caste realities within Christianity have increased their hold since independence, though this is not yet certain.

In towns and cities, the Christians are divided occupationally: domestic servants, factory workers, and middle-class clerical workers with a sprinkling of professionals. Only among the latter two groups are there self-supporting churches. Servant groups are abject and poor, assuming submissive positions in the churches and constantly harking back to the "good old days" of their colonial masters. Industrial workers are fairly well isolated from church life and have neither influence or even any clear position in the Christian community. Apparently the servant classes and factory laborers keep alive many magical and ritual practices of their old village life, usually concealing these from the scrutiny of religious leaders. It is the large, more prosperous middle-class churches that furnish the rallying points of the urban Christian group. While these are Western in forms of worship and habits of living, they are making more and more use of the vernacular rather than English in their services.

These middle-class Christians are, on the whole, more prosperous than Muslims and less prosperous than Hindus in the same strata.

They are continually aware of the fact that Hindus constitute the great middle-class majority and that they are dependent on this majority for their security. Hence they are watchful not to rock the boat or to join any reform movements; what has been called the "social gospel" in American parlance is notably absent in urban Christian churches of India. Politically and socially, urban Christians are well aware of their inferior position and refrain from any actions that could disturb the delicate balance now existing between themselves and the wider community. Conversions are now pretty much a thing of the past, the churches concentrating on consolidation rather than expansion. Almost the only growth in membership today can be attributed to natural increase. Urban Christians are also aware that their civil rights under the Constitution are more and more dependent on the personal inclinations of public officials to implement the legal provisions that now exist. Nehru and those trained under the old British system or in Christian schools are willing to enforce them, but the realization is beginning to dawn that this generation of political leaders will soon pass from the scene. What will happen then? This is highly uncertain and discussed only in private with considerable anxiety. Since this is an issue of crucial interest to the rest of the world as well, it will be significant to keep a watchful eye on Christian public opinion in India, highly sensitive as it is to changes in this quarter.

In the past, India has been notably tolerant of different religious beliefs; in time, however, these variations have been separated from the wider society by a gulf of social distance. Eventually, the new religious forms survived at the cost of their ability to expand. It happened to the Muslims, the Sikhs, and most significantly to the Syrian Christians who now occupy a caste-like position in Kerala. Will the changed status of the larger Christian community in India eventually lead to such a fossilized existence?

Introducing Freshmen to the Short Story

By G. P. VOLICK

What we do is trail the metaphoric phrase
until it nails the truth, which still depends
on you, for truth is what in twenty years
you've learned to see. For instance how your father
lied about a girl because your mother cried—
taught you the wit of scraping out of things
against big odds, when you were barely ten;
or how your mother romping you to bed
coyly turned deaf and let the Mardi Gras
reel off the blinds in faint percussive sighs
and scuffle out of reach—
if later, you'd seen
your parents laughing in the party streets,
there'd be no double meanings left for us
to teach: they'd all be hammered in your hearts.

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Three Women

By DAVID RAY

I.

By now if I had not left
Would our two children be more
Beautiful than those she gave my friend
To whom I introduced her?

II.

By now if we had not parted over
What was after all a trivial misunderstanding,
Would we live on the great ranch
She inherited, and would we ride horses
Up the arroya, reading the Indian inscriptions
On the red canyon walls?

III.

By now if we had not quarreled
In a Times Square restaurant
(When she then demanded a dime
To call a man who *would* take her
to Radio City, to see *Ben Hur*)
Would we still wake to the cat
Purring beside us? Would she still
Urge me to make love to church-chimes?

DAVID RAY, who teaches at Cornell University, has published his work in such periodicals as the *Nation*, the *London Magazine*, the *Paris Review*, *Epoch*, *Les Lettres Nouvelles*, the *Reporter* and the *New Republic*.

■ BOOKS

Life in Its True State

By RICHARD N. PARKINSON

The firm of Random House contends with that of Lippincott for space in this review, by weight of paper if not by number of titles.[1] The two stout volumes of John O'Hara and Jerome Weidman certainly outweigh in any literal sense the three Keystone books by unestablished authors, and the establishment may be relied upon to give value for money. The America they picture will appear familiar and even friendly to readers who have lived in New York or who habitually read the *New Yorker*.

Mr. O'Hara's dedication to technical accomplishment is sufficiently evidenced by his stories for the statements and claims of his preface to seem redundant, but this reviewer at least is prepared to take his claims at their face value. It is not given to everyone to observe with the care and fidelity of Mr. O'Hara, or to record so graphically for our entertainment.

> The girl saw her husband in the doorway, then she screamed. "No! No!" The first shots struck Grant in the spine, he shuddered and died. The girl tried to hide behind his body, but Warner grasped his hand and pulled him aside and took his time firing the remaining four shots. Then he went to the telephone and dialed.
>
> "Smitty, come on out here. I've got something for you," he said.

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[1] *Assembly*. By John O'Hara. Random House, 1961. $5.95.
My Father Sits in the Dark. By Jerome Weidman. Random House, 1961. $5.95.
White Apples. By Arno Karlen. Lippincott, 1961. $1.95 and $3.50.
The Swing. By Vera Cacciatore. Lippincott, 1961. $1.65 and $3.50.
Tell Me a Riddle. By Tillie Olsen. Lippincott, 1961. $1.65 and $3.50.
Flight of White Crows. By John Berry. Macmillan, 1961. $3.95.

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The something Mr. O'Hara has got for us is not often as violent as this, but this is not unrepresentative of his quality. The thrills and cynical sadism of this story, "In a Grove," and the various descents into other social classes than that of Warner, vary a panorama which reveals and analyzes a series of carefully appraised and "typed" characters and situations, in stories of greatly varying length. This reviewer emerges from his American experience with enlarged vocabulary (how could he have known that an ex-boxer's wife's technical term for her husband's casual mistresses is "tramps"?) and bleared eyes. Certainly the scene is not entirely new. The Gibbsville of "A Case History" owes something to "Winesburg, Ohio," and the situation in "You Can Always Tell Newark" would have pleased Edith Wharton. Several hours of reading are amusing, diverting, and unsatisfying. This is not altogether Mr. O'Hara's fault. In the first place, he may claim to be holding the mirror up to nature (or what usually passes for human nature—"The age demanded an image"), and in the second place the very shortness of the short story requires that the maximum effect be made with the greatest economy. Here, the economy often prevents the reader's sympathies from being involved at all and leaves him to enjoy the technique. Only one technical question of the author's kind did arise in the careful perusal of this volume. Did the author intend Ada in "A Cold Calculating Thing" to convey her class status by the subtle grammatical nuance of one of her replies: "There was never anything between Walter and I"? (He prides himself particularly in his preface on what he calls his "mind's ear" for dialog.)

The technique which at once comes to mind in the works of Mr. O'Hara and Mr. Weidman is that of O. Henry. There must be a punch line or something akin to it; there must be a situation which will not merely permit, but actually (cleverly and insidiously) lead up to a swift and unexpected denouement, an unlooked-for peripeteia. In story after story both authors bring off their *coups* with the skill of the detective novelist, until the reader starts predicting the denouement himself. Then let the writer look to his laurels, for his story will fail if it too obviously satisfies the reader's prediction. By the time we reach "Shoe-Shine," near the end of Mr. Weidman's collection, we not only know that there must be a reason for the central character's immobility and sardonic unpleasantness; we are able to make a shrewd guess of it. When the shrewd guess turns out to be correct, we are just a little disappointed; but we are offered a compensation: the character will be interesting in himself.

Mr. Weidman has, even more perhaps than Mr. O'Hara, the faculty which he claims for himself, the ability to make an incident which is "unpleasant, yet attractive because it [is] so well formed . . . seem so

attractive that [the reader will] become interested in it." The form certainly comes first, but the decoration, the manner of telling, above all the packing with significant detail, recalls Somerset Maugham rather than O. Henry: to the "surprise" of the nineteenth century is added the refinement of twentieth century psychology. This, then, is what the plots are for: they are skeletons, to be decked out in flesh (and occasionally in blood), designed to demonstrate by their actions the presence of an individual, and therefore interesting, mind. This is what constitutes the stories' modernity: the invitation to the reader to fit the characters into his own psychological casebook.

Stories like "Gallantry in Action" and "The Hole Card" are "human" situations, and the stories are well narrated, but the quality of feeling which comes through is too generalized. At the climax of the first, "Mr. Loewenstein stared through the train window, at the night smashing by outside, and he fingered the side of his strong face delicately, like a man probing for an old, forgotten bruise that has unexpectedly become painful again." The language is either imprecise through its straining for the unusual effect, as in the verb "smashing," or it approaches cliché, as in the too simple paradox of "strong face delicately," or the enlarged simile of the bruise. It is effective for the purposes of the story, but it is the situation rather than the characters that comes alive. A similar dissatisfaction stems from the writing of the second story:

> "Thanks a lot," Mrs. Bulwer said happily. There was no doubt this was her night. She could feel it in her bones. By the time Mr. Serena showed up at Irene's place at nine or ten, Mrs. Bulwer knew, she'd be so far ahead of the game she'd be able to replace what she had taken out of the wallet for Sandy's present and also tell Mr. Serena, since Irene was obviously too dumb or timid to say it for herself, that people of his type were not wanted in a friendly game, and he could just take his hat along with his wallet and go some place else.

The language is Mrs. Bulwer's; its crudity and simplicity are as shoddy as the lady herself. We may sympathize with her situation, but we see nothing newly or freshly through her. She *is* the sort of character who would "pull the silver fox jacket about her . . . with exaggerated elegance" or to whom an invitation might be issued with a sincerity "approximately equal to that in a bookie's condolences to a heavy loser." This we may grant is pretty smart for Mrs. B.

When the facts of the case are presented with such seeming ease and fluency, the method certainly has its attractions; but the most likely defect of the psychologist's casebook is shared by our two authors: interest in the cases is not accompanied by interest in human beings. One has the feeling

that they watch their fellows only with a professional writer's eye: more than this is needed for a great short story. Compare Mr. Weidman's "Send Four Men to Hanoi" (a serious conflict between the narrow-minded employee of a corporation and one of its executives) with a similar semi-humorous story by the late James Thurber, "The Cat-Bird Seat," and the lack of feeling, the lack of empathy on the reader's part for the demonstrated psyche in Mr. Weidman's story, is apparent. His highly competent portrait of Reardon does not command the same kind or degree of sympathy for the human being, nor does it convey the same conviction of his value, as Thurber's equally clever story about Martin. Too often we feel the limitations of type-casting, even though we may not have met the type before.

These qualifications of the work of the Random House authors are made in no mean or petty spirit, for their stories will provide the (perhaps sustaining) illusion of a peopled world, but their world is not as concerned as its authors think it is with realities. Good of their kind though many of these stories are, they seem to present a phantom world which the authors mistake for reality, and even the most sympathetically drawn characters have the quality (or lack of quality) voiced by D. H. Lawrence's Mrs. Witt in "St. Mawr" as she gazes at a funeral:

> I should *really* like, before I come to be buried in a box, to know where I am. That young girl in that coffin never was anywhere—any more than the newspaper remarks on her death and burial. And I begin to wonder if I've ever been anywhere. I seem to have been a daily series of newspaper remarks myself.

Mrs. Witt yearns after a different order of reality than the one in which she and others are "distracted from distraction by distraction." While it is not helpful to complain that these authors are not Lawrences, the evocation of his name compels the recognition that they have not examined or reflected upon the assumptions that base their society. Their accounts of life in the New World are deficient in realism.

Samuel Johnson remarks at the beginning of one of his *Rambler* papers,

> The works of fiction, with which the present generation seems more particularly delighted, are such as exhibit life in its true state, diversified only by accidents that daily happen in the world, and influenced by passions and qualities which are really to be found in conversing with mankind.

Perhaps the New Yorkers reflect the true state of the New York mind, content to leave fundamentals unquestioned, provided that they can make

accidents interesting and fit passions and qualities into categories. It may seem perverse to reject the experience of the Random House authors in favor of the obviously youthful and experimental (labels in themselves so often uncritically encomiastic or pejorative), yet with some surprize this reviewer finds himself, under the improbable aegis of Samuel Johnson, preferring the three Keystone books published by Lippincott, for their picture of life in its true state. The authors do not set out to write short stories: they wish to communicate passions, accidents, and qualities which they are feeling, seeing, and experiencing for the first time, and some of their excitement about their discoveries comes through. "Have the courage to live a unique life uniquely," dreams one of Mr. Arno Karlen's characters—and he does.

In the stories of all three writers there is a consciousness of more than one order of reality and a love of life as their characters live it. Reality poses a philosophical problem for the hero of the title story in Mr. Karlen's *White Apples*, but the problem is dramatized and becomes an emotional reality to the reader. The story has all the endearing weaknesses of youth: it is too long drawn out for the substance of its central idea; the dream devices are overworked and too openly symbolic to mingle with the everyday realism of other episodes; the autobiographical nature of the philosophical comments is too patent; the story creaks at its connecting joints; and the "I" of the narration does not excuse nor account sufficiently for the relevance of the many incidental "slices of life." Yet the author's vision of his character's life grips the imagination through his conviction of its importance, through the considerable variety of its vivid reportage and by the clear, visual quality of the description. In a simple account of his emotion about Annushka, the narrator of "White Apples" works upon, without asserting a claim to, our sympathies:

> When I looked at her I felt overcome by beauty and sorrow, by the same sensation you feel when you look at a sunset and know that no one will ever see it as you do or know what you feel—the sweetness and poignancy of trees silhouetted against the sky, of soft wet grass beneath the feet, of deep clear water, a single white bird gliding past a roof, of sheer soft flame that cannot sear, a vision whose beauty is so lonely and intense that it is anguish. No one, you feel, will ever know this as I know it now.

With all its imagery, the style seems simple, immediate, unadorned. The very cadences of the prose are a reflection of the elegaic mood of the story. The love affair is the narrator's one experience of a supra-sensory reality, and the squalor of the life around him highlights its ideal beauty. On these grounds we may justify the barely relevant accounts of New

York life around the lovers, though these have an acuteness and poignancy of their own. Even the author's explanations and apologies are disarming. The ninth section of his story reveals a gratitude which shines through its egotism. "My youth was typical for an American artist . . . restless, lonely and unhappy," yet the education of the artists "civilized us in the true sense of the word—introducing us into worlds other than that into which we were born." The conclusion of this frankly autobiographical fragment, remarkably without bitterness, speaks for itself: "The final maturing step, for those who took it, was to stop expecting or wanting to be understood by their neighbors." His other stories, with the exception of the gnomic fragments, show similar maturity and a variety of observation and experience which justify the application of his narrator's last sentence to Mr. Karlen: ". . . in those white apples the promise of something new and great and glistening was offering to be born."

Tillie Olsen shares Mr. Karlen's faith in the value and glory of living with a purpose: just what the purpose is or should be her stories do not quite communicate. Clearly she prays; and the prayer is the prayer of the mother in "I Stand Here Ironing" for her daughter: "Only help her to believe—make it so there is cause to believe that she is more than this dress on the ironing board, helpless before the iron." There are no easy ways out for her characters, and they seem to feel their own importance as individuals. A drunken sailor, a young girl attending her first Negro service, an elderly wife expiring at painful length—these are her heroic figures. Mrs. Olsen's style, the near monotone of some of her narration, tends to clog the reader's perception and comes dangerously near to reportage. Perhaps it is for this reason that her stories do not stand up well to re-reading: with the exception of "I Stand Here Ironing" they are not closely and clearly enough written. There is too much of what an English critic calls "largesse of irrelevant life." The stories need a more careful thinking out of point and purpose.

"Have you ever seen a man burst into blossom?" In comparison with the other Keynote books, Vera Cacciatore's *The Swing* is sophisticated and subtle. Essences, not slices, of life concern her, and her translator seems to have rendered her perceptions with careful precisioñ. The blossoming of her characters and the unfolding of her stories is a careful orderly process which makes even the insane capable of revealing "life in its true state." The blossoming of each story is the realization of a dream. The way in which Signora Cacciatore makes each blossoming appear to be the important fact it is, marks her as a mistress of the art. Particularly in "The Bridge" and in "Demetrio" the order of narration and the choice of significant incident are subordinated to the meaning of the story.

"The Bridge" opens with a dream symbolic of Ignazio's obsession; he awakes in the prison to which his obsession has led him and recalls the childhood nightmares about the river and its floods which had led him to project embankments and a bridge. The idea becomes so compulsive that at last he imagines himself to be the bridge he so dearly wishes to see. Owing to the stupidity of officialdom, he is mistakenly executed as a revolutionary; but he is truly embodied in the bridge which is built after his death. The marble superstructure is his body, engraved with his name, and pulsating traffic spreads over the bridge upon the crimson carpet "which invaded the bridge like a river of blood." The stories are highly symbolic, a little reminiscent of Hawthorne, but carry their weight of symbol as gracefully and confidently as Ignazio's bridge, venturing into a humor which can be sardonic and pathetic in turn. This quality is revealed particularly in the opening of "Demetrio":

> Nicknamed the "Frog" on account of his jerky irregular gait, his flat features, a nose that was almost on the same plane as his cheeks, [the manager] was impolite most of the time and practically always irritable. . . . He would curl his lips scornfully and point his incredibly long, nicotine-stained forefinger. Then, as usual, he would jerk his way up the red-striped carpet or glide smoothly off on the moving staircase to the floor above, bearing his distended belly on his thin, slightly bowed legs. His secretary knew at once from the memorandum book he wielded in his hands that some unfortunate person had received a reprimand. It was not surprising that very few of the staff sought an interview except for serious reasons. No one was anxious to draw attention to himself.

The lift boy dares to ask for an interview, however, and his enthusiasms, which are the subject of the story, effect a sort of rebirth of feeling in the mind of the Frog. As a result of Demetrio's plea for freedom, his "aging and weary face was lit by a momentary and wistful smile" as he sets off on a tour of the closed department store to search for the imagination and creativity of youth. The kind and quality of Demetrio's narration removes any effect of sentimentality which the Frog's reaction may seem to have in this bald summary. The boy's story is taken over unobtrusively by the narrator. The feeling for life manifest in Demetrio and in his elder brother Antonio is vividly reproduced in a series of cinematic shots which develop the story while having the flavor and function of vignettes.

The completeness of these novellas, their careful technique, their penetration beneath the surface of personality to discover a universal relevance in a particular man's passion—these qualities reveal the true state of life. They unfold, even beyond personal tragedy, the vitality which is creative, the developing sense of order in the individual which is re-

flected in the society which his feelings, actions, and sense of purpose modify in their turn. Such stories arouse the feelings, stimulate the imagination, and nourish the reader's aspirations.

Although they come from another continent, there is nothing "foreign" in the stories of Signora Cacciatore, unless it is the freshness of her vision and the absence of sophistication from the minds of her characters—and these are qualities which may be supposed to appeal with peculiar force to an American public. The tales and paradoxes of John Berry come from another world and profess to express "the cheerful horror of West confronting East" in India. The Indian stories have neither the technical polish of, say, Mr. O'Hara nor the freshness of Mr. Karlen. The East is a notoriously difficult subject for serious fiction, and Mr. Berry is serious even in his half humorous, half rueful sketches; but the India of 1961 seems much less real in his stories than the India of 1924 still seems in Mr. Forster's novel. The comparison is a high compliment to Mr. Berry, if not altogether one his stories deserve. One quality he does share with his elder: the use of fancy, almost of whimsy, in the short story. Alas! his whimsy and his philosophy are separate from one another, and he fails to reproduce that unique blend of activity and other worldliness which are the real India. Nowhere in his stories is the reader aroused to the horror (even the cheerful horror) of which we read on the dust jacket, and we hardly ever move out of the Westerner's India, Adela Quested's India, to begin to perceive the mystery, the reality beyond categories and appearances which constitutes the true state of life in the East. Mr. Berry's world is at its best a world of fantasy, at its worst a projection of Western values, even perhaps of New York values, upon the East.

Three Romantics

The Late Lord Byron. By Doris Langley Moore. Lippincott, 1961. $8.50.
Lafcadio Hearn. By Elizabeth Stevenson. Macmillan, 1961. $6.95.
The Infernal World of Branwell Brontë. By Daphne du Maurier. Doubleday, 1961. $4.50.

"A biography," Freud remarks in one of his letters, "is justified under two conditions. First, if the subject has had a share in important generally interesting events, second as a psychological study." The three books reviewed below belong in the second classification. Lord Byron, Lafcadio Hearn, and Branwell Brontë constitute, at first glance, an oddly assorted group: Byron, a man whose name resounded throughout European letters, whether for praise or blame; Hearn, the Irish-American journalist who cast in his lot with Japan and became the best interpreter in his time of his adopted country; and the least known of the children of the Brontë family who died at thirty-one, a failure in art and in life. Yet despite inequality in stature and achievement, they shared certain characteristics. All were writers, all were romantics in temperament, and all offer interesting subjects for "psychological study" in the broad sense.

The Late Lord Byron by Doris Langley Moore is the most recent contribution, and an important one, to the enormous quantity of writing that surrounds the figure of Lord Byron. Perhaps in the strict sense it is not so much biography as a history of biographers. What Mrs. Moore has set herself to do is to chronicle the first fifty years of fact and fiction, both published and unpublished, that follow Lord Byron's death—"the aftermath of his life" as she calls it—attempting to sift truth from a gigantic mixture of fancy, hero-worship, malice, and sheer invention with a view to showing the true and complex nature of the man. Her book begins with the letter of Count Pietro Gamba, brother of the poet's last mistress, announcing dramatically: "The misfortune that has befallen us is terrible and irreparable . . . Lord Byron is dead." Almost immediately the Byron legend, including the "Byron Mystery" with all the tortuous involutions of his marriage, separation, and the charge of incest, began to take form.

Mrs. Moore is forthright in manner and approach. In her Introduction she admits to a bias in favor of Byron as opposed to his detractors, and states challengingly her conviction: "Impartiality in biography seems to me almost an impossibility, and the appearance of it either deception or self-deception." The scope of her investigations, however, and the

breadth of her views make for the reader's assurance. In addition to the vast amount of published material on Byron, she has had unopposed access to the Lovelace Papers (the family archives) of which previous biographers have been able to make only limited use, the voluminous correspondence and manuscripts of Byron's publisher, John Murray, and the manuscript diaries of John Cam Hobhouse, Byron's intimate friend and bulldog-like defender. What emerges from her analysis of these materials is a portrait of Byron, "a shadowgraph," in the author's words, "of a man as projected by the conduct of his friends, acquaintances, and enemies after his death."

In some respects the portrait is not new. Byron is still Byron, the gifted but facile poet, the Regency wit, the volatile man of moods capable of egotism, anger, love, quick boredom, steadfast friendship—all colored by a strange feeling of being fated and by an ambivalent love of democratic liberty. Mrs. Moore recognizes the bi-sexual nature of the poet as have others before her, notably Peter Quennell and Professor Marchand, and she accepts too, and documents, some of his less pleasant conduct toward individuals. In general, however, the effect of the book is to restore a good deal of Byron's integrity as a man while demonstrating convincingly that his death set off a wave of memoir and counter-memoir writing, much of which was ill-informed, exaggerated, malicious, and self-aggrandizing, and which has clouded his reputation for over a century.

Hobhouse, later Lord Broughton, is an important figure throughout the book and furnishes much of the drama of the years following Byron's death. More than anyone else, he was to be responsible in his capacity as Byron's executor for the burning of Byron's memoirs, partly out of fear of the nature of their revelations concerning the poet's marriage and separation, but more largely out of a spirit of jealous rivalry with Tom Moore, to whom Byron had given the memoirs for publication including whatever royalties they might bring. In burning the memoirs, as Mrs. Moore points out, Hobhouse destroyed Byron's own account of his marriage, leaving the field open for Lady Byron to tell her own story in her own way. And having thus set himself up as the guardian of Byron's reputation, he had unwittingly embarked upon a long course of conflict with the poet's future biographers and all those who could bring scandalous charges against him.

Mrs. Moore details Hobhouse's losing battles, first with Dallas and Medwin, who rushed into print the very year of Byron's death, later with the better known Leigh Hunt, Tom Moore, Lady Blessington, John Galt, and Trelawny; and she manages to impart life and interest to these ancient quarrels at the same time that she causes a few heads to fall by add-

ing her own denunciations to those of Hobhouse. She is especially hard on Trelawny ("this libel-writer"), Hunt ("notorious sponger"), and Lady Blessington ("social climber")—but justifiably so, a reader feels, since she succeeds in discrediting much of their adverse comment upon Byron by the simple device of checking verifiable dates and place names.

Her discussion of Byron's marriage and separation is of special interest in the light of the additional information that she is able to contribute from her reading of her manuscript sources. Lady Caroline Lamb, one of Byron's discarded mistresses, is completely revealed for the first time in all her duplicity. While assuring Byron, after the separation, of her concern for his reputation and welfare, she asked for and was granted an interview with Lady Byron in the course of which she openly accused Byron of incest with his half-sister Augusta Leigh and asserted that Augusta Leigh's daughter Medora was Byron's child. She also charged him with "the practice of unnatural crime" and reiterated her various accusations in a series of letters touched with melodrama. Lady Byron, too, appears in no enviable light. Determining to find evidence on which to base a separation, she kept "minutes" of her interview with Lady Caroline, which Mrs. Moore prints, and after eliciting what she could, closed her door to the informer. She pursued the same policy with Augusta, whom she dominated but kept at arm's length. Mrs. Moore has no love for Lady Byron and makes no effort to redeem her in the reader's eyes. Her intellectual interests in mathematics and philosophy (before his marriage Byron dubbed her "Princess of Parallelograms"), her single-minded pursuit of evidence against her husband, and her frigid manner are described unsympathetically, and while the author states candidly, "They could never have made each other happy," the final judgment is ". . . perhaps no young woman ever lived whose writings show so intense a preoccupation with her own rectitude." As for the celebrated charge of incest and the question of Medora Leigh's parentage, Mrs. Moore is curiously cautious. She points to the paucity of real evidence concerning Byron's paternity, but states, "This is not to say that his relations with her [Augusta] were innocent. . . ."

Without question, *The Late Lord Byron* adds greatly to our understanding of Byron. It is a long book, somewhat over-extended by the author's zeal in defending Byron even on minor issues, and it labors under the disadvantage of assuming considerable knowledge on the reader's part of earlier studies of Byron's life. Nevertheless, by pursuing the unique method of examining closely what was said of him after his death by those who knew or claimed to know him, she has sharpened the blurred lines of his portrait.

If Mrs. Moore's task is to reconsider and add to our understanding of a writer who has been the subject of interest and controversy for nearly a century and a half, Miss Stevenson's task has been to supply an accurate, scholarly biography of a writer of lesser stature who has fallen into partial obscurity. Lafcadio Hearn was a restless, unhappy man, a writer of limited range but of marked gifts within that range. He was named for the Greek island on which he was born in 1850, the son of an illiterate Greek mother and an Irish father who was a surgeon in the British army.

His childhood was solitary and loveless. Abandoned by both father and mother, he was brought up in Ireland by an aunt, a childless widow who wanted an heir. The boy was hypersensitive, given to neurotic night-fears, driven to books and reading by his isolation. He spent a lonely year at a Catholic boys' school in France where he learned French, and four years at a similar church school in England where he rebelled against both the authority and the religion of the school. Physical deformity increased his sense of isolation; he lost an eye in a school game, and as a result of over-use his other eye developed a grotesque protrusion about which he was extremely sensitive. To complete the disaster of his boyhood, he was disinherited and sent to live with distant relatives in America from whom he soon broke away.

Thus at nineteen, the Greek-Irish boy found himself a penniless wanderer on the streets of Cincinnati. If Byron with his libertarian principles took an aristocratic interest in the poor, Hearn *was* poor; he knew the life and later wrote of it. Miss Stevenson does a skilled job of piecing together the known fragments of his life in America. We see him succeeding with great difficulty in gaining a foothold in Cincinnati journalism. Throughout his career, Hearn was capable of attracting patrons and protectors, although he usually quarreled with them in the end. In Cincinnati, the editor of the *Enquirer* recognized his talents, and Hearn was soon turning out romantically sensational articles on the lesser-known aspects of the town—the waterfront low life, the lives of the indigent, of the Negroes, of the overworked and downtrodden for whom he had a genuine sympathy. But if Hearn always found recognition, sooner or later he managed to get into difficulties. In Cincinnati he contracted an illegal marriage with a Negro girl, a cook in the boarding house in which he lived, and his own feelings of guilt, the social disapproval of colleagues and acquaintances, and boredom with the city itself seem to have driven him to leave.

In New Orleans, his next stop, he stayed ten years, repeating the same slow climb from poverty to journalistic success that he had first made in Cincinnati. Again he turned to the colorful, the romantic, and the pic-

turesque in his writing. He rose to the literary editorship of the *Times-Democrat*, but once more wearied of his surroundings, and as his writing was beginning to appear in national magaziens, he left New Orleans for Martinique, hoping to support himself by his pen.

His two years in Martinique gave him a love of the tropics but also proved conclusively that he could not make a living as a free lance writer. His decision to accept Harper's offer of an assignment to write a book on Japan was momentous. Japan was to be his last stop. Characteristically he broke off relations with his publisher in a fit of anger and was once again a lonely man in a strange land. As usual, however, he found a protector. He became a tutor in English, then a teacher in a boys' school, finally a professor of English literature in Tokyo Imperial University. The last fourteen years of his life as detailed by Miss Stevenson are among her most interesting pages. In love with Japan and everything Japanese, Hearn taught devotedly and well. He married a Japanese woman younger than himself whose difficulties in adjusting her life to his impulsive and impractical ways are amusingly related. "When I went to him, I found only one table and a chair, a few books, one suit of clothes, and one set of Japanese *kimono*," his wife wrote in her *Reminiscences*. She also found him careless in money matters and with his health. Gradually she brought order into his life. He willingly adopted many Japanese customs in manner and dress, in some cases to such an extent that Westernized Japanese colleagues at the University regarded him as affected. He turned out book after book on various aspects of Japanese life and culture, along with adaptations of Japanese tales. He became a man of some reputation in Tokyo and exerted a strong influence upon his students. In 1896 he exchanged his British citizenship for Japanese and took the name of Koizumi Yakumo.

The years in Japan were perhaps the happiest he had ever known. Certainly he was less lonely. Four children were born to the marriage, and he enjoyed the feeling of family as well as the traditional respect accorded the scholar in Japan. As he approached the age of fifty, however, his admiration for Japan and things Japanese underwent a change. The inevitable disillusionment had begun. He turned inward, isolating himself from friends and family. He still wrote furiously in an effort to guarantee the security of his family, but his resentment increased and he was perturbed by a change in university administration, a change which culminated in the blunt notice a year before his death that the salary he had received as a Westerner would be reduced to that of a Japanese professor. Hurt and angered, he immediately resigned. A year later he was dead.

A modern American critic has referred to Hearn as a "civilized nomad," and the phrase is both felicitous and accurate. Nomadism was deeply engrained in his nature. To fall in love with a city, an island, a country, to write brilliantly, impressionistically of it, to make a place for oneself in it, and then to fall out of love—this was the pattern of his life. He was not an easy man to understand or to live with. He was sensitive, proud, and quick to take offense. His reputation has not worn well, yet perhaps enough time has passed since his death to enable us to see him objectively. He was neither a great scholar nor a profound thinker, and his talents were for the short sketch or descriptive essay rather than for extended efforts, but some of his work continues to live because it is the product of a strangely original and creative mind.

Miss Stevenson has examined the available collections of Hearn manuscripts and correspondence in this country and in Japan, as well as the surprisingly large amount of published material bearing on Hearn. Her book is authoritative, but it also tells an extremely interesting human story in readable fashion. She makes no extreme claims for Hearn's importance as a writer. She sees him as a belated romantic, a young man charmed by Swinburne, fascinated by—and a translator of—the French romantic writers in an age dominated by realism and naturalism. She does point out, however, that his characteristically ornate descriptive style became chastened as he grew older, and that his last views of Japan and the Japanese are not the "soft" views of a man who sees only the exotic and the picturesque. Both points are well taken. Hearn wrote early of his "dream of a poetical prose," but later came to an appreciation of a less florid style which he developed in his later books. "The great point is to touch with simple words," he wrote to an English friend. The change in taste is also to be seen in the shift of his admiration from Pierre Loti to Maupassant. The change in his views concerning Japan appears in his *Japan: An Attempt at Interpretation*, which incorporates his final judgments. Here he emphasizes the enforced discipline, authority, and the pressure of centuries of conformity which lie behind the distinctive features of Japanese society and culture, and he shows himself aware of the industrial and military emphasis of the new Japan, although he had no love for it.

From Byron to Lafcadio Hearn is a step downward in terms of artistic stature and achievement, but from Hearn to Branwell Brontë is a very long step indeed. A self-confessed failure ("In all my past life I have done nothing either great or good"), Branwell Brontë nevertheless began promisingly. In the composition of the now-famous manuscripts in micro-

scopic writing with which the Brontë children occupied themselves, Branwell is known to have played a leading part. More completely than any of the other children, he seems to have lived in the imaginary world of their creation, and Miss du Maurier makes strong claims for the indebtedness of the three sisters' novels to his early influence: ". . . none of these novels would have come into being had not their creators lived, during childhood, in this fantasy world, which was largely inspired and directed by their only brother, Patrick Branwell Brontë."

Why then did he fail where they succeeded? As is so often true in human affairs, there is no final answer. Branwell was precocious, his creative powers developed early, but beyond a certain point they never matured. Miss du Maurier pays tribute to his fantastic productivity and inventiveness, but denies him true brilliance and genius. She also emphasizes his excitable nature and his wild swings from elation to depression and back again which grew more marked as he passed into young manhood. She conjectures that he suffered from epilepsy, she describes him as "neurotic," and "prone to hysteria," and she finds evidences of "schizophrenia" in his poetry. She also cites his increasing use of alcohol and laudanum to blur his sense of failure. In view of the known facts, her analysis seems reasonable. Branwell's father would not send his son away to school because of his nervous temperament, and the boy stayed at home working feverishly at his manuscripts. He was ill suited to life in the real world which he seems never to have understood. He was also inordinately ambitious and confident of his powers when young: "You have lost an able writer in James Hogg," he wrote to the editor of *Blackwood's*, "and God grant you may gain one in Patrick Branwell Brontë." But the editor did not reply, nor did Wordsworth whose support he solicited. He also interested himself in painting but failed of entrance to the school of the Royal Academy in London. Despairing of a career in the arts, he tried tutoring and was dismissed, he became a railway clerk and was dismissed, and so he degenerated into a drunkard, an idler, and a borrower of small sums who suffered from delusions and longed for death. In his thirty-first year his wish was granted.

Miss du Maurier's biographical method is in part that of the fiction writer, and her book is a brilliant performance, fast-paced, engaging, and compassionate. The method has its shortcomings, however; although she cites her sources for each chapter, the attribution of specific thoughts and emotions to her characters and the constant use of conjecture ("might have," "would have," "may have," "perhaps") bear hard on the reader's sense of biographical fact. A further difficulty is the scantiness of materials, aside from the voluminous Brontë manuscripts, for a life of Branwell

Brontë. Miss du Maurier has put this manuscript material to good use in terms of analogy between Branwell and his fictive character creations, but perhaps it is only to be expected that a person who lived so much and for so long in the world of fantasy should leave few records of his life in the real world. Of those that have survived, a characterization by a friend has a particular appositeness: "Poor, brilliant, gay, moody, moping, wildly excitable, miserable Brontë."

University of Michigan —A. L. Bader

PREAMBLE AND STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES

The Association of Literary Magazines of America

RESOLVED, that we form an association, the purpose of which is to increase the usefulness and the prestige of the literary magazines in the United States and Canada.

Other cultural organizations—art museums, symphony orchestras, little theater groups, and liberal arts colleges—have had, and presumably will continue to have, public and private support, but the magazines devoted to the publication of literature have been supported, when at all, only spasmodically, since they are thought, and wrongly, to be private enterprises created for commercial ends. It will be the purpose of this organization to combat this climate of opinion, and therefore to strengthen the economic condition of the magazines as a group and, accordingly, their capabilities. Thus, the association will work to secure outside financial help for the magazines from individuals, foundations, and other organizations; it will undertake to meet collectively the grave problems of distribution and promotion which the magazines face; it will serve to exchange information between the magazines and to meet other common problems of the group. To these ends it is now dedicated. Its members will meet at least once a year, and a permanent central office will be established.

It is a well-known historical fact that American literature since 1910 would not have survived in its present variety and vigor without these magazines. Almost without exception, all the distinguished modern writers in America started their careers in them—writers such as Faulkner, Frost, Sandburg, Eliot, Hemingway, Saroyan, Tennessee Williams, and Robert Lowell, as well as scores of younger writers now emerging into prominence. Nor are the magazines concerned only with, dedicated only to, the great talents. A nation's body of literature does not depend wholly on the great, and since the magazines have served as a seedbed for each generation of creative writers they have also helped to preserve the very impulse to literary creation. The literary magazines of the present generation are continuing this indispensable tradition.

The nucleus of this organization was formed in the St. Paul Hotel in St. Paul, Minnesota, on November 11, 1961, at a meeting of nineteen magazines. Applications for membership in this organization, The Association of Literary Magazines of America, are invited from magazines whose editors were unable to attend this meeting. Inquiries should be addressed to the temporary headquarters of the Association: Story Magazine (editor, Whit Burnett), 135 Central Park West, New York 23, New York.

Signed by: Fred Jordan for *The Evergreen Review*; Robert Weaver for *The Tamarack Review*; Roy Miller and June Oppen Degnan, for *The San Francisco Review*; Robie Macauley and George Lanning for *The Kenyon Review*; Kim Taylor for *The Texas Quarterly*; Hyung Woong Pak for *The Chicago Review*; Paul Lett and Jane Esty for *Mutiny*; John Logan and Roger Aplon for *Chicago Choice*; Victor Navasky for *Monocle*; Larry Bensky for *The Paris Review*; Whit Burnett for *Story*; Jules Chametzky for *The Massachusetts Review*; Mr. and Mrs. Russell Nash for *The Middle State Review*; Paul Rohmann for *The Antioch Review*; M. D. Elevitch for *First Person*; Sarah Foster for *The Minnesota Review*; Robert Bly for *The Sixties*; Andrew Lytle and Allen Tate for *The Sewanee Review*; Reed Whittemore and Erling Larsen for *The Carleton Miscellany*.

Criticism

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